

SUCCESSFUL ADULT EDUCATION IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:  
THE BETHEL SERIES

by

Robert M. Brashares

A Professional Project  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Ministry  
The School of Theology at Claremont  
June, 1976

*This professional project, completed by*

ROBERT M. BRASHARES

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty  
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

*Faculty Committee*

Howard Clark Hall  
Jas. Verheyde

May 3, 1971  
Date

Frederick C. Hough  
Dean

Dedicated to

- Pastors who wonder "How can Bible study be done in a way that will involve more than just the faithful few?"
- Church members who ask "When is our church going to help all our people to know the Bible better?"
- To pastors and church members who have worked with the Bethel Series, and have created a program that can provide an answer to both of these questions.

## PREFACE

In response to the need of our churches today, here is an in-depth report of a church-wide Bible study program which succeeded in The La Habra United Methodist Church. This program deserves close scrutiny to see if it can be a help to other congregations.

This report could not have been completed without the expert assistance of my faculty advisors, Professor Howard Clinebell and Professor Jack Verheyden. Thanks also to my two colleagues in the ministry, Rev. Dick Northup and Rev. Rich La Shure, for they worked with me in planning, teaching, and evaluating the Bethel Series in the United Methodist churches in La Habra, California, and in Scottsdale, Arizona. My thanks go also to my efficient typist, Mrs. Jean Zimmerman, for it has been a pleasure to work with her.

Rev. Dick Denton, Librarian at the School of Theology at Claremont, and proof reader of this project, has been especially helpful in speeding up the process of securing, correcting, and approving this thesis. His speedy and efficient aid is greatly appreciated, especially in the academic setting where there are often frustrating delays in getting theses read and returned.

To the Bethel Series students, and to the congregations at La Habra and Scottsdale, who have given such

whole-hearted support to using and improving the Bethel Series, I want to express my hope that their efforts will be a help to other pastors and to other congregations in the days ahead.

Finally, to Rev. Harley Swiggum, the originator and author of the Bethel Series, and to his whole administrative and teaching team, I offer my thanks on behalf of the thousands of congregations which have been strengthened by their efforts. May that happy number ever increase.

Robert M. Brashares

Scottsdale, Arizona

April 2, 1976

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>FROM FAILURE TO SUCCESS IN ADULT BIBLE STUDY . . .</b>	<b>1</b>
Our Situation in La Habra . . . . .	1
The General Situation in Methodism . . . . .	4
<b>TO BEGIN WITH STRENGTH BASIC COMMITMENTS ARE NECESSARY . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>
What Commitments Are Necessary? . . . . .	7
Beginning With Strength . . . . .	10
<b>THE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PASTORS AND LAY TEACHERS . . . . .</b>	<b>12</b>
Its Importance . . . . .	12
A Negative Example . . . . .	12
A Positive Example . . . . .	15
Training Program for Pastors . . . . .	16
Training Program for Lay Persons . . . . .	17
<b>HOW TO INVOLVE THE WHOLE CONGREGATION IN BIBLE STUDY . . . . .</b>	<b>20</b>
Usual Methods Are Not Adequate . . . . .	20
The "Ground-Swell" . . . . .	20
The "Congregational Phase" . . . . .	21
Intensive Congregational Recruiting . . . . .	22
Publicity Build-Up . . . . .	23
"Time of Decision" Letter . . . . .	23
Pre-enrollment . . . . .	24
Teacher Selection . . . . .	25
Progressive Class Scheduling . . . . .	26
What Happened? . . . . .	27
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE "KNOW HOW" IS DECISIVE . . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>
Administrative Plan Is As Important As Materials. . . . .	30
The La Habra Example . . . . .	30
Administrative Principles . . . . .	31
Administrative Procedures For Ministers . . . . .	32
Administrative Procedures For Teacher- Trainees . . . . .	34
Administrative Training In "National Administrative Meetings" . . . . .	34

	Page
<b>Continuing Teacher Support . . . . .</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>NEW DIMENSIONS FOR CONTINUING A STRONG ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM . . . . .</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE BETHEL SERIES . .</b>	<b>40</b>
Two Sets: Stated and Unstated . . . . .	40
Stated Principles . . . . .	41
1. "The difference between Greek and Hebrew thought forms" . . . . .	41
2. The literary principle . . . . .	43
3. The historical principle . . . . .	44
4. The purpose principle . . . . .	45
5. The 'shelf' principle . . . . .	46
Unstated Principles . . . . .	47
1. The principle of curriculum structure . . . . .	47
2. The principle of visual emphasis . . . . .	49
3. The principle of memorization and tests . .	51
Stated Principles Are Not Taken Seriously Enough . . . . .	52
1. Hebrew/Greek principle . . . . .	52
2. Literary principle . . . . .	52
3. Historical principle . . . . .	53
4. Purpose principle . . . . .	53
5. Shelf principle . . . . .	54
Conclusion . . . . .	55
<b>EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE BETHEL SERIES . . .</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE BETHEL SERIES . .</b>	<b>58</b>
Strengths . . . . .	58
1. A worthy goal: Bible study . . . . .	58
2. The commitment of the Minister and Leadership . . . . .	58
3. The Training Program for Pastors and Lay Teachers . . . . .	59
4. A systematic recruitment plan aimed at the total congregation . . . . .	60
5. Administrative "Know How" . . . . .	61
6. A follow-up program . . . . .	61
7. Hermeneutical Principles . . . . .	61
8. Visual and Memory Aids . . . . .	62
9. A package of colorful curriculum materials . . . . .	62
10. Results . . . . .	63
11. Administrative Service . . . . .	64
Weaknesses . . . . .	65
1. The goal of this Bible study is not high enough . . . . .	65

	Page
2. The hermeneutical principles are undercut . . . . .	66
3. Overdependence upon the lecture method of presentation . . . . .	67
4. Lack of experiential grounding . . . . .	67
5. Lack of administrative procedures for the later stages of the program . . . . .	68
<b>RECONSTRUCTION: BETHEL PLUS . . . . .</b>	<b>70</b>
Go With the Bethel Series Strengths . . . . .	70
Add Needed Pluses . . . . .	72
1. The whole Bible . . . . .	72
2. A multi-faceted goal . . . . .	73
3. Serious application of the hermeneutical principles . . . . .	74
4. A variety of learning experiences . . . . .	76
5. Experiential grounding . . . . .	80
6. Creation of Christian community . . . . .	81
Conclusion . . . . .	82
<b>APPENDIX . . . . .</b>	<b>84</b>
A. Bethel Series Lesson Materials . . . . .	85
Teaching Picture and Explanation for Study 1 .	86
Study 1, for student's notebook . . . . .	87
Assignment Sheet . . . . .	90
Test . . . . .	91
B. Principles of Biblical Interpretation . . . . .	92
C. The Old Testament . . . . .	93
D. Man In The Image of God . . . . .	94
E. Class Plan for the Fourth Session . . . . .	96
F. Pastoral letter to teacher prospects . . . . .	97
G. Recruitment Letter for Teacher-Trainees, Scottsdale, Arizona . . . . .	98
H. Evaluation of the Bethel Series enclosed in Rev. Talbert's letter . . . . .	99
I. Recruitment Letter for Teacher-Trainees, La Habra, California . . . . .	106
J. Overview of Bethel Series . . . . .	107
K. "Contact Card" . . . . .	108
L. Time of Decision Letter, Question and Answer Sheet . . . . .	109
M. A Summary Of The Teacher Selection Procedure . . . . .	111
N. What To Look For When Choosing Your Teacher Trainees . . . . .	112
O. Scale of Number of Teachers to Train . . . . .	113
P. Schedule for Securing Teacher-Trainees . . . . .	114
Q. Dedication Service for Bethel Series Teacher-Trainees . . . . .	115

	Page
R. Order blank for Bethel Series materials . . .	116
S. Time Schedule For Teacher-Trainee Phase . . .	117
T. A Description Of The Bethel Series And A Statement Of Its Objectives . . . . .	118
U. New Dimensions Folder. . . . .	121
V. Letter of invitation to Teachers' Work- shops, with enclosures . . . . .	122
W. Picture for Bethel Series New Testament Study Six . . . . .	127
X. The Bethel Series, National Administrative Meetings, booklet . . . . .	128
Y. Bethel Series Presentation Booklet . . . . .	138
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .</b>	<b>142</b>

SUCCESSFUL ADULT EDUCATION IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:  
THE BETHEL SERIES

Abstract

This thesis deals with the problem of the decline in membership in The United Methodist Church in general, and in The La Habra United Methodist Church in particular. A forerunner of this downward trend is the decline of the Sunday School. As it goes, so goes the church. Therefore, there is a need for a solid program that could strengthen the Sunday School and the Church. A Bible study program, that could build participation throughout the total church, could be the best answer to this problem.

Different programs were tried. When they proved ineffective, a major commitment was made to enter into "The Bethel Series", a long range program of Bible study. That decision in 1972 marks the beginning of my study of the Bethel Series. I have been trained by the parent organization in Madison, Wisconsin to be a Bethel Series pastor-teacher. Although I have interviewed other pastors who have used the Bethel Series, most of my findings come from using the Bethel Series program and materials in two United Methodist churches, in La Habra, California, and in Scottsdale, Arizona. In this thesis the basic elements of the Bethel Series are presented, evaluated, and incorporated into an augmented and strengthened program.

It is not by chance that this thesis is titled "Successful Adult Education In The Local Church: The Bethel Series". My findings in La Habra and Scottsdale are that the program makes it possible to go "From Failure to Success In Adult Bible Study," as I have reported in Chapter One. Indeed, many other churches are being strengthened by this program.

The major portion of this thesis is a presentation of the many strengths, and the several major weaknesses of the Bethel Series. In Chapter Ten I gather together these various findings in a program that I call "Bethel Plus". It uses the strengths of the Bethel Series, and corrects its weaknesses. Strengths such as the high quality leadership training program, and the effective administrative "know how" of the Bethel Series are included. (Of special interest to ministers is Chapter Four, "How To Involve The Whole Congregation In Bible Study".) At the same time the weaknesses of the Bethel Series, such as its hermeneutical slant, the overdependence upon the lecture method, and the lack of experiential grounding are corrected. This is done by adding the full range of biblical material, a variety of "discovery learning experiences", and time for the students to share their efforts to relate their study to their daily life. Personal growth, and the creation of Christian community, are goals of the program, as well as Bible study.

I believe that these findings can be of great help to pastor and lay persons who want to learn how to get a large percentage of the members of their congregations into meaningful Bible study classes, and strengthen their churches.

The Bethel Series was used effectively to give a real boost to the adult education program of the La Habra United Methodist church. Even with its weaknesses, its strengths have been a help to many congregations. If it is possible to go forward with the strengths of the Bethel Series, and to correct its weaknesses, it can be of even greater help to congregations all across the country!

FROM FAILURE TO SUCCESS IN  
ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Our Situation in La Habra

Our Church School had been in decline for five years. This was particularly clear in the decline in attendance of children, but it was also evident in what had happened to adult education in our congregation. The regular Sunday morning Adult Class, which was usually engaged in Bible study, had declined from a group of 20-30, to an average attendance of 10. The other adult Sunday morning class, which experimented with the Foundations Studies in Christian Faith, had an average attendance of 5. The feeling in the Bible class was that they had dwindled down to "the faithful few". Their efforts to enlarge the group didn't succeed. In a congregation of 1,200, we had only 10 people engaged in a Bible study class on a regular basis!

The question was "How can we get more of our adults into meaningful classes, especially Bible study?" Our Education Commission tried a variety of class offerings and settings: film series, neighborhood Bible study groups, home "Share Your Faith" groups, and studies in the midst of fun and fellowship, in retreat settings. These were good experiences for the people involved, but

they did little to reverse the general decline in our adult education program. Even our special annual adult education event, a "visiting fireman" for a 6 to 8 week series, was dropped because of declining interest. Short range efforts, and special classes, didn't stem the decline. We needed something solid enough and interesting enough to involve a large group of adults in meaningful Bible study. But what? And how? The answers didn't come easily.

It took a year of research and debate before we moved to put Bible study at the center of our congregation's life. The first time this was proposed, it was voted down because it would involve a major investment of money, and a commitment by the Administrative Board to involve the total congregation in Bible study. Someone moved that "We should find some Methodist materials, and develop a program that would cost less!" Research followed and various materials were considered, but the Council on Ministries would not settle for a few people gathered to study the Bible. They wanted the total congregation involved in serious study, through a continuing program, with a real commitment of funds and leadership to make Bible study central in the life of the church. After a year of study and preparation, the Council on Ministries made its recommendation to the Administrative Board. It asked for "a basic commitment by the congregation to Bible study as a major program in the total

church." This was backed by a financial commitment of \$1,000 for leadership training and materials. The Bethel Series program of Bible study, produced by the Adult Christian Education Foundation of Madison, Wisconsin, met these conditions. It was selected.

The results of this commitment have been impressive. Twelve laypersons have spent two years (125 hours) in Bible study and teacher-training, preparing to be Bethel Series teachers. Some said it couldn't be done. Yet, twelve adults, 8 women and 4 men, did complete the two years of teacher training, and became ready and able to teach. Their high level of commitment was evident to all, for the teacher-training sessions were placed first in their lives. They looked forward to the sessions as an experience in growth, spiritual awareness, and fellowship.

These twelve men and women have become the leadership necessary for the next phase of the Bible study program. They have also played the key role in recruiting capacity participation in the first congregational classes.

Enrollment had to be closed when 120 church members preregistered and filled to capacity the first Bethel Series classes! There is a limit of 30 persons per class. Plus there was a waiting list of 15, pre-registered for the next class, to begin three months later!

To move from one class of 10 people in adult Bible study, to three classes with a total of 120 in Bible study, and a waiting list of 15 for the next class, is a real up-swing in adult Bible study: Moreover, this three year period I have described is just the beginning: It is the beginning of a program that is planned and scheduled to reach out and bring the vast majority of the members of the congregation into Bible study classes.

Why is this new program succeeding while previous programs failed? The techniques and factors which are essential to this success will be discussed in the following chapters.

#### The General Situation in Methodism

The decline the La Habra church experienced has been experienced by almost all Methodist churches in recent years. In fact, its decline was not as drastic as most. The general decline of the Methodist church, in membership, and in M/TP (Methodists to Total Population) is shown in the chart that follows.<sup>1</sup>

<u>Year's End</u>	<u>United Methodists</u> (in thousands)	<u>Total Population</u> (in thousands)	<u>M/TP</u> (%)
1944	8,100	133,700	6,090
1948	8,700	146,600	5,986

---

<sup>1</sup> Percentages computed from figures published in the Statistical Abstract, U.S. Census Bureau, and the General Minutes of the United Methodist Church.

<u>Year's End</u>	<u>United Methodists</u> (in thousands)	<u>Total Population</u> (in thousands)	<u>M/TP</u> (%)
1952	9,200	156,000	5,897
1956	9,400	165,000	5,696
1960	10,200	179,000	5,702
1964	10,300	194,000	5,309
1968(EUB Union)	11,000	197,000	5,584
1970	10,700	206,000	5,189
1972	10,300	210,000	4,905

In 1975, Mr. Spurgeon M. Dunnam, writing in The United Methodist Reporter, pointed out that this membership decline is continuing. He said, "Membership within the denomination has indeed been declining--at an annual rate of nearly 150,000 for the past five years."<sup>2</sup> Most Methodist churches have experienced this decline.

Church school attendance has also been in general decline. Warren Hartman indicates that the peak year in church school enrollment was in 1961 when it was 6,934,876. Between 1961 and 1970 the church schools of The United Methodist Church reported losses of 1,649,264.<sup>3</sup> That is a 24% loss! Our conference has lost an even higher percentage!

Church school membership in the Southern California-Arizona Annual Conference now stands at 107,818 persons officially enrolled in our programs. Ten years

---

<sup>2</sup>Spurgeon M. Dunham, III, The United Methodist Reporter, January, 1975.

<sup>3</sup>Warren Hartman, A Study of the Church School, cited in "Factors That Affect Attendance in Church Schools", Reshaping Education Workshop No. 1, Tempe, Arizona, October 4, 1975.

ago it was 176,946. We have seen a decline in church school membership of 68,128 in this decade! Church school membership has not been this low in our conference since 1948 when it was 109,208. We have had an amazing decline of nearly 40% in the last ten years! Our average attendance has declined from a high of 84,893 in 1964 to the present (1974) figure of 57,871. That is an attendance drop of 32% in ten years.<sup>4</sup>

In short, the decline the La Habra church was experiencing is the experience most Methodist churches in recent years have had. Sunday School attendance and church membership have been going down.

If the La Habra church, and other churches have found a program that makes it possible to move up successfully against this trend, there is something in the Bethel Series that can help other congregations. In the following chapters I will present this successful Bible study program, evaluate it in detail, and augment it to create an even stronger program.

---

<sup>4</sup>"Factors That Affect Attendance in Church Schools", Reshaping Education Workshop No. 1, Tempe, Arizona, October 4, 1975.

TO BEGIN WITH STRENGTH BASIC  
COMMITMENTS ARE NECESSARY

The need for Bible study and a revitalization of the Church School is strongly felt by most congregations, but the debate goes on as to what should be done about it. As in the case of the La Habra church, a first response of most churches is to try all kinds of classes, retreats, programs and appeals. Only after these short-range efforts have failed to build strong classes, do ministers and the lay leadership of the church become willing to look at committing themselves to a long-range program. It's hard to let go of the desire for easy answers. "Doesn't our church have a program for this that is cheaper and quicker?" People keep looking for a panacea, but they see all their easy answers fail to produce the results they seek. If the congregation persists in wanting a church-wide program of Bible study, it is sooner or later compelled to look at the kind of basic commitments that are necessary to achieve that goal.

What Commitments Are Necessary?

A major educational revitalization won't go far without the support of the minister in charge. Oh, minor things can be achieved by a committee, without the minister's involvement, but not a long-range program that

involves the recruitment of key leaders, and the stimulation and participation of the total congregation, plus a large financial commitment. Without the minister's commitment to this major thrust in adult education, it isn't going to happen. He or she is the first person who must commit himself to this program, which includes going to the two-week training conference, recruiting teacher-trainees, and spending two years taking them through the Old and New Testaments. The pastor must confront the specific demands of what it is going to take to get this solid program of adult education underway, and decide to do everything within his or her power to see that it succeeds. The minister's commitment comes first.

The governing body which represents the widest sweep of the congregation needs to make its commitment to this major program if it is to go forward. Most important, the dimensions that separate this program from "business as usual" need to be set forth dramatically, so that the leadership is confronted with making a decision, and committing themselves to what it will actually take to activate this program. To be specific, do they want to invest almost \$1,000 to enroll their church in the Bethel Series program, send their minister to the two-week Orientation Clinic, and have some of the best leaders take on the 4-year commitment to be trainees and then teachers of the Bethel Series? Those are not small

commitments. A sheet that not only describes the Bethel Series, but also gives a specific overview of the steps the congregation will go through during the four years of its development, can be helpful at this point.<sup>5</sup>

Motivating this investment of leadership time and money is the congregation's basic commitment "to make Bible study a major program of the total church", in contrast to having a little Bible class tucked away in a corner somewhere.

The governing body should be encouraged to debate freely whether or not Bible study is important enough to deserve these major commitments. In the case of the La Habra church, it took a year of research and debate before the Board was ready to make the commitments that are involved.

One footnote on presentations to the governing board: I do not recommend the use of the sales representative of the Bethel Series, good though he or she may be, for some people will automatically be against the sales person. Board members may suspect self-interest in trying to sell them something. Instead, I recommend the use of "satisfied lay persons" from another congregation. They can tell what the Bethel Series has done for

---

<sup>5</sup> Presentation Sheet with Overview of Bethel Series, for Education Commission, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, March 11, 1975. (Can be seen in full as Appendix J).

them and their congregation. Lay persons will respond affirmatively to that.

The more information the governing board has as to what is involved in the Bethel Series, the more productive and wholehearted its commitment will be. The Board began with a commitment "to Bible study as a major program in the TOTAL church." Now this is given expression by the vote of the governing body, not in general terms, but by their commitment to the Bethel Series in particular, including a substantial financial commitment for the training of their pastor and their lay leaders so they can teach the Bethel Series to the whole congregation. The governing body's commitment is sizable.

The momentum created by the pastor's commitment to the program, and the endorsement of the governing body, stimulates the members of the congregation to make their own commitment as they sign up for the Bethel Series. If the members of the congregation were unwilling to do this, the whole program would fail. However, if the minister and leadership of the church have been showing their enthusiasm for the program, most likely the members will have caught that enthusiasm and be eager to commitment themselves and enroll in the program.

#### Beginning With Strength

Programs in the church often fail because either

the minister or the governing board are not enthusiastic about them. Such programs begin with a half-hearted effort. Members may not even become aware of the new programs, or worse yet, they may hear only negative things about them. No wonder such ventures fail to receive strong support. They are doomed from the start.

The procedure of securing the enthusiastic commitment of the minister and of the governing body, including a full discussion of all the specific steps and costs involved, makes it possible to begin this program with real strength and enthusiasm. A result is that a larger percentage of members than ever before become eager to study the Bible. This is beginning with strength. It is the natural result of getting enthusiastic commitments from the minister and leaders of the church. Yet, more than enthusiasm is needed. There's going to have to be solid content in the course to maintain the interest. This leads us to our next chapter, to see what kind of training it takes to do the job.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR PASTORS  
AND LAY TEACHERS

Its Importance

The United Methodist Church produces excellent curriculum materials, but the materials are often poorly used, and fail for the very reason that the pastor or lay teachers have not had training in how to use them effectively. The insight that we should get from this is quite clear. An adequate training program can make the difference between success and failure in a new educational program.

A Negative Example

Consider the training program for the new, United Methodist "Our Living Bible Series". The church spent a lot of time, talent and money preparing this excellent curriculum material. It was just what many churches needed: a fresh, new approach to adult Bible study. Then what happened? The national publicity barrage was heavy, but the local training effort turned out to be almost a total flop. The publicity flowed out at flood-tide through the publications of the United Methodist Church. The training program, however, fell ultimately to the District, the Santa Ana District in my case, and

to its lowly Adult Education person. A short plug was given for the new curriculum, sandwiched in among many other announcements at a District Conference. The District training event was announced by a mimeographed letter which invited ministers, and/or adult education persons to attend. The training would involve only one evening, and it was voluntary. That one evening was to be the major effort for training pastors and lay teachers.

The result? Less than half the churches of the Santa Ana District had anyone present for the training event. Of those who did show up, one third were ministers, two thirds lay persons. This means that less than 10% of the pastors of the District bothered to attend the meeting, or to get any training in the use of the new curriculum.

In the light of what was said in the previous chapter about the cruciality of the minister's commitment, it appears that this new program does not have much ministerial support, and will not have much success in the local churches. It was also the case that for the churches represented, there was only the minister present, or one lay person, not both. This, and the fact that there was usually only one lay person present, means that there was no mutual support system established to help the people use whatever they learned. All of this indicates the small number of pastors and lay persons who even attended

the training session, and the detrimental effect this lack of commitment and training will have on this program in the local churches.

The quality of the training session itself also left much to be desired. It was all too characteristic of such training events in the United Methodist Church. The leader passed out the new student's book, and apologized that the teacher's books had not arrived. He made some general comments about the study, and showed a film strip telling who had produced the study, and some of the hopes they had as to what it might accomplish. So far, not bad.

When the leader asked the group, "Do you think you might use the new study, and if so, how?", he might as well have said "good-bye" to any training plans he may have had. The people started to go off in various directions. One person asked, "What do they mean when they say the Bible is the word of God, do they really believe it?" Another said, "We can't use the series for our class has already picked its study book for this year." Another person started to tell about the "inter-denominational" woman's Bible study group she was going to in her town, and what it meant to her. And so it went!

Wondering how to recover, and get back into control again, the leader was soon relieved to note that the time

was gone. He announced, "Other materials are there on the side table if you're interested. I do hope that you'll use this new study somewhere in your church. Let's have the benediction."

As the people left, I couldn't help but wonder if the training session had helped to prepare anyone to use the new curriculum. I did see two ministers staying on, looking at the materials, and talking about how they intended to use the study in the Bible class they were already teaching. Two pastors planning to continue with the small classes they already had--not exactly a fantastic impact on the 50 churches of the District. This is what I call a negative example of training pastors and lay teachers. Is there another way? Let's see.

#### A Positive Example

The Bethel Series provides a comprehensive training program for pastors and lay teachers. It is long enough, and deep enough to equip pastors and lay teachers with the skills and materials they need to conduct a successful church-wide Bible study program in the local church. The training is given in two phases. First the pastors are trained, and then they recruit and train the lay teachers. Let's look at each of these training programs.

### Training Program for Pastors

Pastors have to commit themselves to two weeks of training at the Bethel Series Orientation Clinic in Madison, Wisconsin. This actually boils down to 10 full days of training, when you knock off the weekend and free time. This provides ample time for thorough training.

The training is comprehensive in that it not only goes through the curriculum materials, taking the class through the study of the Old and New Testaments, but it also includes such other important, but often neglected matters as: Teaching Methods, Administration of the Program (including selection and recruiting of teacher-trainees), thorough discussion of the objectives of the Bethel Series, as well as presentation of the hermeneutical principles used in this study of the Bible. In the later chapters we will go into the detailed suggestions that are given as to how to administer the program successfully, as well as these other topics that are included in the training program.

This training is not only thorough and comprehensive. It also includes free time and social events that make the training experience more pleasant, and creates group support which strengthens the pastors in their ability to learn, and to follow through on what they have learned. I believe that all of these features

are important in training the pastors, and in increasing their ability to create a successful educational program back in their own congregations. That's why I consider this a positive example of what is involved in training pastors.

#### Training Program for Lay Persons

Lay persons are asked to commit themselves to a heavy training program. In fact, they are asked to commit themselves to two years of training, and then to two years of teaching! This big commitment is not played down or minimized. In fact, it is put to them loud and clear in the letter that invites them to consider becoming Bethel Teacher-Trainees:

If you volunteer for the Teacher-Training Program, here are some of the requirements:

1. Each trainee will spend two and one-half hours a week in a study session with the ministers for the next two years.
2. Each trainee will be required to do between 8 and 12 hours of homework a week between these weekly study sessions.
3. Each trainee will be required to learn about 15 Biblical Concepts a week while classes are in session.
4. All members of the trainee class will be required to write examinations as the study program progresses.
5. All members of the trainee class must be a member of the La Habra United Methodist Church.
6. When the training program is completed in two years, each trainee will then be required to teach other adults in our congregation using the "Bethel Series" as the format of their studies.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>Letter from Rev. Richard E. Northup, Minister of

Adults come into this program because they are eager to get high quality training. The old and misleading line of "There's nothing to it" has not been used to recruit them.

The training program for lay persons has some of the comprehensive features previously mentioned. The pastor not only takes them through the study of the Old and New Testaments, guiding them in the use of the Bible and the Bethel Series Workbook, he also gives them instruction in such matters as: Teaching Methods, and Administration of the Program. Of course, in addition to this content material and skill training, time is also spent in group building, sharing, and integrating what one is studying into one's life. All of this equips the lay persons so they actually become eager to start teaching their own class, as they complete the training program.

This combination of thorough training for pastors and lay persons gives the Bethel Series leaders the best possible chance for success as they move toward enrolling the congregation in Bible study classes. The classes are to be taught by the lay persons who have been trained. Will a congregation attend Bible classes taught by lay

---

Education, La Habra United Methodist Church, September 6, 1974. (It appears in full as Appendix I).

persons instead of ministers? The next chapter attempts to answer that question.

## HOW TO INVOLVE THE WHOLE CONGREGATION IN BIBLE STUDY

### Usual Methods Are Not Adequate

To involve a large percentage of the congregation in Bible study, has been our goal from the beginning. But how can it be done? It is not easy to recruit a large number of church members, and leaders, to start new Bible study groups. Obviously, something more than our usual way of doing things is required if we are going to get a large percentage of the congregation into Bible study groups. Let us look at how this big step can be achieved.

### The "Ground-Swell"

A program is needed that begins and grows until it gains the attention and participation of the whole congregation. To do this it needs to begin with the strong backing of the leaders of the church, and then grow by carefully planned steps until it wins the participation of all of the members. This is an unusual program, as we have seen in the previous chapters. For our purposes here, I call it a "ground-swell" program.. It begins small, but keeps growing and gaining momentum over a long period of time, so that it is finally able to achieve its goal of involving the whole congregation.

The time for the numbers of the congregation to get into Bible study classes is called "the congregational phase". Two years of preparation have built up the "ground-swell" leading up to this time of congregational decision and action. It began when the pastor and the official leaders of the congregation committed themselves to this serious program of Bible study. It continued when the pastor received his training, and returned to tell the people about the program. The members of the congregation were contacted when the pastor asked for key persons to be teacher-trainees, and the congregation has been kept abreast of the progress of the program. For 18 months, these key leaders have been in teacher training, and they have been talking to their friends about the program.

The "ground-swell" of interest has increased as the congregation has watched the program grow. Now they should be ready to respond. Throughout all of this, the fact has been kept clearly before them that all of this is being done for one purpose: to provide Bible study classes for all of the members of the congregation.

#### The "Congregational Phase"

This is when the church members enroll for the Bible study classes, and the classes begin. This is "the hour of decision" when large numbers of church members

make their decisions whether or not to participate. All that has gone before has been aimed at this moment. At this point, three important things need to be done: intensive congregational recruiting, teacher selection, and progressive class scheduling.

#### Intensive Congregational Recruiting

The best recruiters are the persons who have been "turned on" in the teacher training class. Before the class began these people were already leaders in the church, with lots of friends. They have been talking with their friends about the class while they've been in it, and interesting them in it. Now, as they come to the closing weeks of the class, each teacher-trainee draws up his or her own "contact list" of friends to recruit for the first congregational classes. Teacher-trainees also respond to "contact cards"<sup>7</sup> from people, who have marked the card that they "wish to be contacted by a teacher for enrollment in the program", and enroll them. Each week, all of the teacher-trainees report on progress they are making in recruiting for the first classes. The excitement builds as the pre-enrollment list grows. At the same time, the recruiting is assisted by a publicity

---

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix K.

build-up, a "Time of Decision" letter,<sup>8</sup> and a three month pre-enrollment plan. Each of these helps to move the recruitment process along.

#### Publicity Build-Up

There is a two month publicity build-up to assist the recruiters. The Bethel Series people call this "the information phase". During this period, every Sunday bulletin, and every church news sheet carries a step-by-step presentation of what is happening, and what is going to happen. Questions about the program are answered, and people are told what they can gain, and what the Teacher-trainees have gained, from the classes.

#### "Time of Decision" Letter

Everybody is hearing about the program and thinking about it well BEFORE their pastor sends them the letter announcing that "The TIME FOR A DECISION IS NEAR!"<sup>9</sup> This letter also includes a contact card for use if they "wish to be contacted by a teacher for enrollment in the program." This is their opportunity to be among the first to pre-enroll in a Bible study class. The official opening of enrollment is the following Sunday.

---

<sup>8</sup> Letter from Rev. Richard E. Northup, Minister of Education, La Habra United Methodist Church, April 15, 1974. (It appears in full as Appendix L).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Pre-enrollment

A three month pre-enrollment period gives a good opportunity to reach "full enrollment" well before the classes begin! That is a new and exciting experience for most congregations. It's not often that they hear something like this: "Our four Bible study classes, with a maximum of 30 in each class, beginning next month, are already filled to capacity! We are starting a 'waiting list' for the next class which will begin in two months. You will want to register for it before it is completely filled." That's electrifying news. This pre-enrollment technique is one of the key factors in the success of the Bethel Series "enrollment phase".

The opening week of pre-enrollment, and the weeks that follow, provide an opportunity in each Sunday service for the program to be lifted up before the total congregation, and for a progress report to be presented as to how people are enrolling for classes that are still two months away! Meanwhile the teacher-trainees are enrolling people, and moving toward the happy announcement, that weeks or months before the classes begin, "The pre-enrollment is complete and all the classes are full!"

The use of an enrollment card, and the payment of an enrollment fee are helpful in making definite and affirmative the enrollment process. After signing and paying, people are eager for the class to begin. Moreover,

the names of some of the people who have enrolled are published in the Sunday bulletin each week. This helps others to make their decisions, and to get into the program before it is full and the enrollment is closed.

#### Teacher Selection

All the teacher-trainees agreed, when they enrolled for their class, that they would be willing to teach for two years after completing their training. As they come to the completion of their class, they have gone through the Old and New Testaments. They have also been given instruction in educational procedures, and how to use their materials in teaching a class. They are reassured by the fact that the class they will teach will be only one hour in length, while the training class they have been in has been two and one-half hours in length.

Most of the members of the teacher-trainee class are by then eager to share what they have learned. From among those who are ready and able to teach, the pastor selects those who best suit the needs of each of the upcoming classes. The character of each class has been set by drawing up the actual class roll, after seeking a balance of men and women, as well as a balance of temperaments and viewpoints. Teachers are then given their class rosters, so they can call each enrollee two weeks before the first class session to inform them where the class will meet.

### Progressive Class Scheduling

One of the most important features of this program is the way in which it grows. This is true of class scheduling, as well as of the other aspects of the program. "Progressive class scheduling" aims at a "pyramid effect." The first classes begin, and then additional new classes are added, every 7 weeks, while the original classes continue. Thus more and more people are participating in the classes. The congregational classes are for 7 weeks, followed by re-enrollment for the next 7-week unit. A diagram may help at this point to make clear how this "progressive class scheduling" has a growing or "pyramid effect."

#### Class Scheduling Pyramid

					Unit F
			Unit E	Unit E	Unit E
			Unit D	Unit D	Unit D
		Unit C	Unit C	Unit C	Unit C
	Unit B				
Unit A					
Sem. 1	Sem. 2	Sem. 3	Sem. 4	Sem. 5	Sem. 6

New classes, called units in this chart, are added each 7-week "semester", so as the program continues there are more and more classes, with more and more of the members of the church involved. Though there wasn't room to show it on the chart above, this process of growth continues in Semester 7 and beyond.

This is a process for continuing and extending this adult education program, so that it ultimately achieves

its goal of involving the total congregation in Bible study.

What Happened?

At the La Habra United Methodist Church these recommended procedures were followed. The result was as predicted in the early stages of the program. A "ground-swell" of interest developed as the pastor and church leaders committed themselves to the program, and selected the first teacher-trainees.

The experience of the teacher-trainees in the training class was outstanding. Their enthusiasm for the program spread to the congregation. The two personal statements that follow are representative of the affirmative feelings of the teachers. Mrs. Peggy Cameron wrote to the congregation, "I had done just a hit and miss reading of the Bible, and found the discipline of reading it from 'cover to cover' most stimulating, thought provoking, and enriching. And the greatest reward was the deep sense of fellowship and caring which was built up over the two year period among those in the class." Barbara Tucker was equally enthusiastic: "The Bethel Bible Series, along with the close fellowship of our group, combined to open up for me a new world of understanding about God's 'working plan' throughout human history, and the meaning, responsibility and powerful potential that is ours as Christians living in today's world." The

congregation responded to the enthusiasm of the teacher-trainees, and we arrived at "the congregational phase" in great shape.

We began "the congregational phase" with a goal of starting and filling four classes of 30 pupils each. This means that our first task was to recruit 120 of our members for these Bethel Bible classes. Several Board members said, "We've never had that many adults in classes before. We don't think it can be done!" The first classes began with a closed enrollment of 120, and a "waiting list" for the next class! This was an exciting experience for our church.

A fifth class was started three months later, in accord with the "progressive class scheduling" procedure. Shortly thereafter, there was a change of Senior Ministers. It is not clear whether or not this had any effect on the momentum of the program. At any rate, I have received the following report from the leader of the program, the Rev. Dick Northup. He points to a slow down that is effecting the later stages of the program.

We have found it very difficult to start any new classes after the first new class was started . . . We have not been able to recruit any additional Bethel Teacher-Trainees either. It looks like we will run with what we have, and try another Teacher-Trainee series beginning in January, 1977.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Rev. Richard E. Northup, Minister of Education, La Habra United Methodist Church, December 9, 1975.

The affirmative impact of the Bethel Series on the congregation during its first two years, leading up to and including "the congregational phase" is clear. It is also clear that for the program to continue to grow in the third year and beyond, takes even more publicity, recruiting, and follow through than to get it started.

## ADMINISTRATIVE "KNOW HOW" IS DECISIVE

### Administrative Plan Is As Important As Materials

New curriculum materials are often produced by the United Methodist Church, only to fall flat, not because the materials aren't good, but because there is no clear administrative plan for their effective use. Such important items as training leaders "how to" use the material, and how to recruit people for the classes, are often completely overlooked. In the third chapter I pointed out that this very thing was almost fatal to the effectiveness of "Our Living Bible Series" when it came out and was "put into use" in southern California. I believe it is essential for us to be aware that when we start a new program, two things are important: the curriculum MATERIAL, and the administrative PLAN for its effective use. The PLAN, including administrative "know how" is decisive.

### The La Habra Example

The success of the early phases of the Bethel Series in La Habra was due largely to the administrative "know how" its minister received at the two-week Orientation Clinic the summer before the program began. At that time his training in administrating the program included

such items as: how and when to recruit the teacher-trainees, how to handle the publicity build-up, and how to take the other steps mentioned in the previous chapter which create the "ground-swell" necessary to involve a large percent of the congregation in the program.

This administrative "know how" is passed on at several levels: (1) at the Orientation Clinic for ministers, (2) in the teacher-trainees class, and (3) in the National Administrative Meetings which are held, for all the churches in a region, just before they embark on the congregational phase of the program. There is also a regional dinner for the teacher-trainees, mid-way in their training, which is helpful in maintaining their morale, and facilitating their constructive influence on the total congregation.

It is not presented in this form, but it seems to me that the Bethel Series "know how" consists of both administrative principles, and of administrative procedures. Light mention is given along the way to the former, and the latter are covered in considerable detail in training sessions that deal specifically with how to administer the program.

#### Administrative Principles

Here are some of the administrative principles upon which the Bethel Series is based.

1. "People like to climb mountains." People will respond to the challenge of disciplined Bible study. Teacher-trainees respond to the demand of two and a half hours in class, and 8-10 hours of study per week.
2. "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well." The way you do it indicates how important it is to you. High quality materials are to be used throughout the program.
3. Commitment and training are essential to the success of the program. Before the Bethel Series can be used in a congregation, its pastor must attend a two week training session in Madison, Wisconsin.
4. Movement:
  - A. The program starts small, and people get excited as they see it build and grow.
  - B. The students get excited as they fill their Bethel Series Workbook binders; "the Green Stamp Principle". The material is supplied in installments, one week at a time.
5. The "Herd Principle": people like to be crowded together with others who are doing the same thing. Therefore, all the classes should meet on the same night, and as close together as possible, so the students are aware that many others are also participating in the program.
6. "Bethel knows how to do it", for they have learned what works from their experience with over 3,000 congregations. So -
7. "Don't mess with the program!" Follow the instructions.
8. Distinguish between the MATERIAL (the Bible and curriculum material) and the PROGRAM, the systematic way of involving people in its use.
9. The difference between success and failure is specific objectives, so you know what to do. Specific objectives are set for each phase of the program.
10. The \$3 student registration fee increases the student's sense of ownership, and increases faithful participation. It also pays back the original \$750 tuition fee that the church paid.

#### Administrative Procedures For Ministers

In their two-week Orientation Clinic the ministers

get the principles listed above, plus instruction in the following administrative procedures.

1. An overview of the total 4-year plan, with the specific objectives for each phase of the program, and recommended procedures for achieving the objectives.
2. The procedure for selection of teacher-trainees.<sup>11</sup>
  - A. "15 Things To Look For In Choosing Teachers"<sup>12</sup>
  - B. Scale of recommended teacher quota for size of church<sup>13</sup>
  - C. Time-line for teacher selection<sup>14</sup>
    - (1) Letter of invitation<sup>15</sup>
    - (2) Weekly inserts for church bulletin
    - (3) Time-line for pastoral interviews<sup>16</sup>
  - D. Announcement of names of teacher-trainees<sup>17</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Paper presented at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summer of 1973, entitled "A Summary Of The Teacher Selection Procedure". (Appears in full as Appendix M).

<sup>12</sup>Paper presented at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summar of 1973, entitled "What To Look For When Choosing Your Teacher Trainees". (Appears in full as Appendix N).

<sup>13</sup>Paper presented at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summer of 1973, entitled "The Number of Teachers To Train". (Appears in full as Appendix O).

<sup>14</sup>Paper presented at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summer of 1973, entitled "A Summary Of The Teacher Selection Procedure". (Appears in full as Appendix M).

<sup>15</sup>Letter from Rev. Richard E. Northup, Minister of Education, La Habra United Methodist Church, April 15, 1974. (It appears in full as Appendix L).

<sup>16</sup>Paper presented at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summer of 1973. (Appears as Appendix P).

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

- E. Dedication Service for teachers<sup>18</sup>
- 3. The procedure for ordering and using specially prepared Bethel materials.
  - A. Bethel Series Binder for each student
  - B. Weekly printed lesson and assignment sheets for each student
  - C. Tests
  - D. Poster-size pictures, one per lesson "memory retainer"
  - E. General bibliography
  - F. Order form and scheduling for ordering<sup>19</sup>
- 4. The procedure for scheduling and training teacher-trainees over the two-year period.<sup>20</sup> A Bethel pin is presented to graduates.
- 5. The procedure for moving toward "the congregational phase" in a way that leads to "a closed enrollment." The National Administrative Meetings that come later go into this in detail. I will cover it there.

#### Administrative Procedures For Teacher-Trainees

As the teachers come toward the close of their training, most of the administrative principles and procedures are passed on to them by the minister, in a very brief form so they know what is happening.

#### Administrative Training in "National Administrative Meetings"

These regional meetings prepare ministers and lay

<sup>18</sup> Dedication of Bethel Bible Series Teacher-Trainees, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, January 4, 1976. (Appears in full as Appendix Q).

<sup>19</sup> Order blank for Bethel Series materials, dated May 1, 1975, similar to those distributed at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summer of 1973. (Appears as Appendix R).

<sup>20</sup> Paper presented at the Orientation Clinic, Madison, Wisconsin, Summer of 1973, (appears in full

personnel with additional administrative "know how" right before they launch "the congregational phase" of the program. They are given procedures which help them succeed in achieving "a closed enrollment". This adds up to a 20 page booklet of instructions.<sup>21</sup> The procedures include:

1. An overview of the structure of the congregational phase.
2. A procedure to insure a closed enrollment.
3. Materials for the 2 month publicity build-up.
4. Procedures for the 3 month pre-enrollment period.
5. Step-by-step check list for Bethel Series Administration.

Armed with these detailed instructions, the minister and lay helper move ahead step-by-step to see that all the classes are filled.

#### Continuing Teacher Support

I mentioned earlier that the administrative plan also includes a Teacher Banquet to boost the teacher-trainees' morale, and help them to spread their enthusiasm and dedication throughout the congregation. This banquet is a regional event, put on by The Bethel Series people.

---

as Appendix S) entitled "Time Schedule For Teacher-Trainee Phase".

<sup>21</sup> Booklet distributed at the January, 1973, Administrative Meeting in California, entitled "The Bethel Series, National Administrative Meetings, January, 1973". (Appearing in full as Appendix W).

It comes after the teacher-trainees are well into their studies and need a boost. They come back from the banquet all fired-up, determined to follow through on their commitment, and to make whatever sacrifice is necessary to help the congregation get into the Bible.

There is also a summer Teachers' Workshop in Madison, Wisconsin, for teacher-trainees who desire more skill before they teach their first classes.<sup>22</sup> It begins Sunday evening with a banquet, and ends Friday noon. The enrollment fee is \$25 and the room and board is \$98. This Workshop is not required, but is offered to teacher-trainees who wish to take advantage of it.

Pastors are instructed to have regular sessions with their teachers, after they start teaching, to provide them with continuing support and training.

The Bethel Series is strong on administrative "know how". Every detail of how to interest, recruit, and train lay persons is covered, to insure that this educational venture succeeds. This may be the most valuable contribution of the Bethel Series.

---

<sup>22</sup> Letter of invitation, and fact sheets concerning the Teachers' Workshops, March 1974, from The Bethel Series headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin. (Appear in full as Appendix V).

## NEW DIMENSIONS FOR CONTINUING A STRONG ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

One of our hopes in starting the Bethel Series was to strengthen the adult education program of our church, and to have more adults enrolled and participating. Indeed, one of the reasons the Bethel Series, a Bible study program, was selected and used is that we thought more church members could be recruited for a Bible study program than for any other kind of study. The strong participation in the Bethel Series bears this out. Yet, when the large numbers of adults complete their two years in the Bethel Series, then what? What will happen to our Bethel Series students after they graduate? Will our adult education program drop down to the size it was before, or can something be done to continue the momentum that has been built up?

"New Dimensions" is the program The Adult Christian Education Foundation offers to maintain the strong adult education development that has been launched with the Bethel Series. It is the answer to the question "What comes after the Bethel Series?" The sales folder says that it "builds upon the Scriptural foundation developed by the Bethel Series."<sup>23</sup> The New Dimensions curriculum

---

<sup>23</sup>Presentation leaflet for "New Dimensions", from

covers five 7-week sessions, that span two years. As students finish the Bethel Series, they can easily move into the New Dimensions program.

The New Dimensions courses include (1) To Love and To Cherish, dealing with the contemporary problems of marriage, in two 7-week sessions, (2) The Ten Commandments, applying the commandments to today's complex social patterns, in two 7-week sessions; and (3) Gems for Daily Living, exploring the relevance of the scriptures for daily living, in one 7-week session.

Like the Bethel Series, the New Dimensions program requires large commitments from a congregation. It then supplies the total package of leadership training, materials, and administrative know-how. One of the advantages claimed for this follow-up program is that the pastor can train his Bethel Series teachers to lead these classes. This only requires three or four week nights of orientation, or a weekend retreat, as compared to the eighteen months it took for the Bethel Series!

I have not entered the New Dimensions program, nor evaluated it as yet. I mention it here because I do recognize the importance of being prepared with strong adult classes into which the Bethel Series students can graduate. The New Dimensions program, or some other

---

Adult Christian Education Foundation, Madison, Wisconsin.  
(Appears in full as Appendix U).

well-prepared class offering is absolutely necessary if the high level of adult involvement in Christian education is to be maintained.

## HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE BETHEL SERIES

### Two Sets: Stated and Unstated

There are stated hermeneutical principles for this program. At the start of the ministers' Orientation Clinic, the first session of the Teacher Trainees' class, and the first session of the congregational classes, an official Bethel Series set of hermeneutical principles are presented as a guide to interpreting and understanding the Bible. These stated principles are listed below.

Of equal importance to the Bethel Series are unstated, but operative hermeneutical principles. These interpretive principles are unstated, but they are revealed in a variety of places, such as in the topical structure of the Bethel Series curriculum, in the class material in The Bethel Series workbook, in the teaching pictures and the explanations that go with them, as well as in the selection and interpretation of Biblical texts included (and excluded) in the program.

In this chapter we will look at both the stated and unstated hermeneutical principles of the Bethel Series. First, we consider the stated principles which are lifted up in the ministers' Orientation Clinic, in the teachers' training, and in the congregational classes.

Stated Principles

1. "The difference between Greek and Hebrew thought forms".<sup>24</sup> To understand the Bible we need to keep in mind the difference between Hebrew and Greek thinking. This is important, for otherwise we may impose Greek questions on the Bible, and then expect it to answer what it is neither designed nor prepared to answer. This is a danger because the Bible comes out of the Hebrew tradition and way of thinking, while we have been heavily influenced by the Greek way of thinking. Understanding of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek viewpoints equips us with a number of specific insights for Bible study.

In the use of words, the Hebrew is concrete and pictorial, while the Greek is abstract and rational. The same situation might be described in quite different ways, the Hebrew saying, "She flies around like a cat chasing her tail!" while the Greek might say, "Isn't she a bit irrational recently?" It would be a mistake to think that the Hebrew is telling us that the woman is literally flying about, or that she is a cat, and so forth.

In the Hebrew way of thinking, to understand something it is not necessary to take the description as

---

<sup>24</sup>Rev. Harley Swiggum, Orientation Clinic,  
Madison, Wisconsin, June 4, 1973.

literal in every detail. In reading the Bible, a book that comes out of the Eastern, Hebrew mind set, we need to remember they have a way of expressing truth in concrete pictures that is different from our Western way. "For example, to describe the same situation a Greek might say, 'The father fails to convey the male imprint to the child, and the mother fails to give emotional support; no wonder the child is a delinquent.' In contrast, a Hebrew might say, 'If the father eats onions and the mother garlic, don't expect the child to smell of sweet perfume.' The point is not about food, but that parents shape their children. Again, it is even possible to miss the point by taking the statement literally instead of seeing its intent. As in the case of the fellow who had been hit by a car, and groaned, 'Call me an ambulance'; a hippie replied, 'O.K., so you're an ambulance.' We need to see the intent of the picture."<sup>25</sup> We must walk in the shoes of the Hebrews, and see from their perspective. Otherwise, we will misuse, and misunderstand the Bible.

Again, the Hebrew is interested in the why, the meaning and purpose of existence, while the Greek wanted to get at the how, the understanding of process that has developed into our scientific approach to existence. Take the Genesis account of creation, for example. The Greek wants to know, "How did it happen? How long was a day?"

---

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

While the Hebrew is saying, "This is why God did it, so that we are to live in fellowship with God, and respond to His good plan for life." The tidy distinction here is that religion deals with the why of existence, and science deals with the how of it.

Another difference between the Greek and Hebrew ways of thinking is that "the Greek is interested in the 'vehicle' while the Hebrew is interested in the 'cargo'.<sup>26</sup>" The Greek is interested in the story, while the Hebrew is interested in the message of the story. Take the Adam and Eve story for example. The Greek gets caught up in the details of the story and wants to search for the garden, or know more about the serpent, the tree, and so forth. The Hebrew declares the message of the story is that we have to decide whether we will obey God or not, and deal with this guilt and separation. The story is indeed a description of our human situation. It is the message of the Bible, of God's love and plan for us, that is even more exciting than the detailed history and stories of the Bible through which it is declared. The Hebrew is more interested in the "cargo" than in the "vehicle".

2. The literary principle. "Truth can come in many literary forms, and it is important for us to

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

realize that we are dealing with a variety of literary forms in the Bible."<sup>27</sup> One literary form is that of straight historical reporting of events. An example is the anointing of David as king in the fifth chapter of Second Samuel. A second literary form is poetic reporting of historical events. An example is "The Song of Deborah", in the fifth chapter of Judges, singing of Deborah's rout of the Cannanites. Because it is poetic, is it to be taken any less seriously? No. A third literary form is allegory. In the 80th Psalm we read, "Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt; thou didst drive out the nations and plant it. Thou didst clear the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land." The people Israel are being described as like this vine. A fourth literary form we meet is personification. Here human characteristics are given to inanimate objects, as in Isaiah 55:12 where we read "The mountains . . . shall break forth into singing, and the trees of the field shall clap their hands." Truth can be conveyed in all of these various literary forms. The point here is to seek out the truth that the Hebrew is seeking to express.

3. The historical principle. The historical time and setting of a Biblical passage must be understood if we are to arrive at the proper understanding of the

---

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

passage. Take for example the words in First Corinthians 11:5 about women covering their heads. "To properly understand this we need to know the historical setting, namely that at that time prostitutes did not cover their heads. The meaning then of this passage is that women of God were to be careful not to be confused with prostitutes. To see this is quite different than to say, as Roman Catholics and Mennonites do, that this means that women today need to have their heads covered in church."<sup>28</sup> A knowledge of the historical setting leads us to know this is not about hats, but about the need for church women not to be confused with prostitutes by anything they do.

4. "The purpose principle. The primary purpose of the Bible is to unfold to us the nature of God and His intention for us."<sup>29</sup> It is concerned with establishing a relationship in which we trust and obey God. Another way of saying this, is that the Bible's purpose is religious, having to do with our right relationship to God, self, others, and world.

"Two disclaimers go with this. One is that since the Bible's purpose is religious, it has 'limitations'. It is not a kind of Grand Depository of all the information on every subject under the sun. As George Buttrick

---

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

puts it, 'A student who expects to find a historical romance in a book of mathematics, or sober history in a volume of Shakespeare's plays, will be both puzzled and affronted in his reading. So with any man who expects to find in the Bible what it was never intended to give.' The other disclaimer is the distinction that was touched on earlier, that the Bible is a religious rather than a scientific book. It is as inadvisable to send a man to scripture for the final word on matters of science as it is to send a French chef to an arc-welder's manual for an authoritative word on French cooking. This is neither a put-down of religion or science. It is only to say that the Bible's purpose is religious in thrust, not scientific."<sup>30</sup>

5. "The 'shelf' principle. Leave on the shelf your assumptions about the Scripture, and let the Bible speak for itself."<sup>31</sup> Another way of saying this is that we are interested in "Biblical Theology" (which grows directly out of the text) and not in a "Dogmatic Theology" of preconceived ideas. We can guard against this by admitting our confessional bias, and making a real effort to be free of it in looking at the text, so the Scripture can speak for itself. "This is especially important and

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

difficult for groups which are tied to a confession of faith, and are tempted to use the Bible for proof texts, and for groups with a strong cultural identity, such as the Puritans, who tried to use the Bible to proof-text their own moral positions. Such positions must be put on the shelf, if we are to listen to the Bible, and let it shape our beliefs and practices."<sup>32</sup>

These five principles: The Principle of Hebrew versus Greek Thought, the Literary Principle, the Historical Principle, the Purpose Principle, and the Shelf Principle, can be of great help in interpreting and understanding the true meaning of the Bible. These are the stated principles of the Bethel Series. Now for some of the unstated, but influential principles underlying the Bethel Series.

#### Unstated Principles

1. The principle of curriculum structure. An interpretation of the Bible is expressed in the material selected for study, and the topical headings for the chapters of the study.

As to the portions of the Bible studied, the Bethel Series is supposed to be a balanced overview of the total Bible. Actually, there is imbalance,

---

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

especially in the Old Testament. Fifteen of the twenty lessons on the Old Testament concentrate on Genesis through Kings. Students don't get an in-depth exposure to The Prophets, and to The Writings.

The study of the New Testament is given a heavy dogmatic emphasis. It begins with Galatians, to make clear that "in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."<sup>33</sup> I note that instead of beginning with the gospel of Matthew, this is a doctrinal approach to the New Testament.

This doctrinal emphasis continues in a pronounced way throughout the Bethel Series study of the New Testament. The second session follows this creedal introduction by studying John, the most theological of the gospels. It's not 'til the fifth lesson that we get into Matthew, and study "Jesus the Teacher". The sixth session is on "Jesus the Savior". The study of "dogmatic theology" continues here, and in the seventh and eighth session.

Seven of the first eight sessions deal with the gospels from this dogmatic approach. The ninth session is on Acts, but under the title "Kristos 'O Kurious".

---

<sup>33</sup> Bethel Series, Study One in New Testament, text from Galatians 4:4-5 which is used as text for the lesson, and central theme of the teaching picture.

Starting with the 11th session, the titles of the sessions are: Justification (11), Faith (12), The Church (15), False Teaching (18), Sanctification (19), The Second Coming (20).

A pastor notes that this heavy doctrinal approach, without the in-flow of historical and literary factors which made the Old Testament study interesting, turned the New Testament study into "a drag". His comment reflects how doctrinal the Bethel approach is to the New Testament: "We seemed to have more difficulty in class with the New Testament studies centering on Salvation, Justification, Resurrection, Faith, The Church, and The Second Coming."<sup>34</sup> These doctrinal concerns make it harder for the student to hear what the Bible itself has to say.

My point is that the very structure of the curriculum, the material selected, and the topical arrangement of it, reveals a slant toward "dogmatic theology" rather than "Biblical theology".

2. The principle of visual emphasis. The class periods actually center around 40 pictures that are placed in front of the class, one per class session, and interpreted according to a prescribed interpretation. These pictures turn out to be more central in the class sessions than the scripture itself. The pictures are allegorical

---

<sup>34</sup>Rev. Dick Northup, "Evaluation of the Bethel Series," January 23, 1975.

in nature, and have built within them a certain "plan of salvation" which hardly gives freedom for various interpretations.

We might assume that the themes covered in the 40 teaching pictures include every major theme of the Bible. We would be wrong, for they do not. In spite of the fact that the Bethel Series description asserts that there is no theological emphasis carried through the series, nevertheless it is apparent that theological concepts are portrayed in the 40 pictures. For example, New Testament Study Six features a picture that shows a man, who is crawling onto the main beam of a large cross that spans a deadly abyss, and can transport him from a dangerous waterfall to a pleasant land where there is a stairway that disappears up into the light. The picture for New Testament Study Six can be viewed as Appendix Y. This picture and the other 39 could warrant a whole study in themselves as to what they are saying to us, and the "plan of salvation" their designer is presenting.

The pictures usually come through with a simplistic and literalistic interpretation of the Biblical material. It is true that much is made of downplaying the importance of the pictures, and saying they are only a "memory aid". However, the pictures are used. They do dominate the class setting, and provide visual images which are simplistic and literalistic.

3. The principle of memorization and tests. Any student can tell you that what a professor puts in his tests is a good clue to what he thinks is important. Both the tests and the class sessions in the Bethel Series place much weight upon two things: (1) memorizing and identifying the concepts in the 40 teaching pictures, and (2) memorizing and identifying the chapter and verse where various selected concepts are found in the Bible.

These concepts fall short in that they do not cover the wide range of Biblical themes. Also, the memorization of the whereabouts of these concepts runs the risk of becoming rote learning, and does not insure that these concepts are understood. We need to get inside the meaning of the concepts and relate them to our situation. Even more important, there is a vast difference between remembering a list of concepts, in contrast to finding new life in Jesus Christ, and making changes in one's life.

Confronting the Christ, and making changes in our lives, are stated goals of the Bethel Series. The class sessions and tests need to deal with these matters, and not just memorization of concepts.

So much for the stated and unstated principles of the Bethel Series. A word also needs to be said as to the degree of seriousness with which the stated principles are followed.

Stated Principles Are Not Taken Seriously Enough

1. Hebrew/Greek principle. The student is urged to "Think Hebrew" in order to understand the meaning of Old Testament texts. However, the lead Bethel Series teachers at the Orientation Clinic have not bothered to gain any knowledge of the Hebrew language, nor is knowledge of Hebrew encouraged.

2. Literary principle. The understanding of literary forms is emphasized in the introduction to the Old Testament. The documentary hypothesis on the composition of the Pentateuch is mentioned, but then the teacher commented that the student need NOT hear about it until after he or she has gained a grasp of the material.

There is no treatment of the gospels as literature. The differences between the gospels are not treated. Any differences between the gospel reports are simply ignored!

There seems to be a shift in the Bethel approach to literary forms, without any logic for the shift in approach from one passage to the next. For example, the Genesis creation story is seen as poetic in form, while the Exodus story is called "historical reporting of an event", as is the birth narrative in Luke. Must most of Exodus be understood literalistically because it is

written in narrative form? Are all the details of Luke's birth narrative, angels, their proclamation, and the shepherds' visit, to be understood literalistically as historical facts? No, I don't believe so, nor do many who give serious consideration to the literary forms we find in the Bible.

3. Historical principle. This is violated when the New Testament faith is read back into the Old Testament. For example, every effort is made to "prepare" the student of the Old Testament for the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. In the last lesson on the Old Testament, Study 20, "the coming of Jesus Christ" is mentioned as the one hope of the newly restored Hebrew nation.

Rather than follow the historical principle wholeheartedly, the Bethel Series fails to take advantage of hundreds of insights found in archaeology, anthropology and the religious literature of antiquity.

4. Purpose principle. The point is made that the purpose of the Bible is religious, not scientific. The student need not bother with scientific understandings, but think only of the message of the Bible. This misses the point that God's revelation takes place through nature. It encourages in the mind of the student the out-dated conflict between science and religion. There

is no suggestion that the creation of man (mankind, Homo Erectus) and his development took place through the Stone Age, Copper and Iron Ages, and so forth.

In contrast to the first three principles which are not taken seriously enough, the Bethel Series does take the "purpose principle" very seriously, but to the extreme of overlooking God's revelation IN nature. It thus encourages an unnecessary conflict in the mind of the student between science and religion.

5. Shelf principle. We are rightly warned to put our preconceptions on the shelf and to let the Bible speak for itself. At every point the supremacy of "Biblical theology" (that which grows directly out of the text) is affirmed, and "dogmatic theology" is denied. Nevertheless, the structure of the study, the teaching pictures, and the memory work, reveal the dogmatic concerns of the authors. Another way of saying this is that "We find a considerable use of eisegesis rather than exegesis."<sup>35</sup>

The Bethel Series lessons include questions on "dogmatic" matters. For example, in the second study the class is just getting into Genesis, but the student is

---

<sup>35</sup>Personal report enclosed in letter from Rev. Melvin G. Talbert, General Secretary of the Board of Discipleship, May 9, 1975, entitled "An Evaluation of the Bethel Series", and composed by George Koehler, Warren Hartman, and Horace Weaver, Administrators in the Division of Education. (Appendix H).

asked, "How were First Adam and Second Adam alike?" That's a doctrinal concern not found in Genesis. In the later lessons students are asked questions about Luther's concept of vocation, Luther's doctrine of the right and left kingdoms, and so forth. The material obviously has a Lutheran perspective. "The Bethel Series has a point of view, and it is a dogmatic one."<sup>36</sup> This has not been put on the shelf, nor has it been acknowledged.

### Conclusion

The stated principles of the Bethel Series can be helpful in understanding the Bible. However, these principles, with one exception, are not taken seriously enough. Moreover, the unstated, but operative principles which I have listed, contradict and undercut the stated principles. The result is that they slant one's interpretation and understanding of the text.

These shortcomings in biblical interpretation are so important, and so numerous, that a major revision of the Bethel Series materials is necessary if they are to be used.

---

<sup>36</sup> Rev. Rich LaShure, "Bethel Bible Training Series Overview", June 12, 1975.

### EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE BETHEL SERIES

In the Bethel Series, in contrast to their presentation of hermeneutical principles, there is no systematic presentation of educational principles. Nevertheless, various educational principles are stated along the way, during the Orientation Clinic for ministers.

Among the principles that are affirmed are the following:

1. Learning takes place through personal relationships.
2. In teaching, alternation between "heavy" and "light" material breaks the tension, and helps to involve the emotions as well as the intellect.
3. Memorization and tests help students gain a sense of accomplishment, and give them the content for increased insight.
4. Pictures, symbolic visualizations, are effective aids to memory.
5. People remember best that which they (a) hear, (b) see, and (c) participate in; all three.
6. There are two ways to embrace an idea: (1) academically, with the mind alone, or (2) "into the blood", with the emotions as well. The latter is to be preferred, so that one's life is changed.

In my teaching experiences, I would affirm that these principles are in general true. However, it makes a lot of difference whether students are required to memorize material that is fundamental, or trivial. This determines whether or not they gain content that is adequate to give them real insight into the text.

It is true that visual aids assist memory. That is why it is so important that the pictures should cover

the main themes of the Bible, and not merely put together a collection of preferred concepts.

Again, if learning takes place through personal relationships, as it does, and is most life-transforming when the emotions are involved, it is all the more important that the teacher share the whole sweep of the historical faith, and not merely present his personal position.

The final principle, making a strict distinction between academic versus emotional insight, is artificial, for all affirmations, even the most "objective", involve a combination of opinion and feeling.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE BETHEL SERIES

The Bethel Series is planned to have a sweeping effect upon a whole congregation. It starts with a four-year commitment of time and effort from the leaders of the Church, and aims to involve the total congregation in Bible study. It is an ambitious and costly program. At the center of it is a pre-packaged leadership training program, and colorfully printed curriculum materials that include the creativity, skill, and beliefs of its authors. To use the Bethel Series is to discover that it has many strengths, and many weaknesses. In summary form, here are its strengths and weaknesses.

### Strengths

1. A worthy goal: Bible study. The primary goal of the Bethel Series is to engage the members of a congregation in a long-range program of Bible study, so they gain a deeper understanding of the Bible's message, and are confronted by Jesus Christ. Certainly this emphasis on Bible study is a strength of the program, for the Bible is the book of Christianity.

2. The commitment of the Minister and Leadership. I pointed out in Chapter Two how essential these basic commitments are to the success of any major educational

program. Methodist educational authorities who are critical of other phases of the Bethel Series affirm the importance of these basic commitments: "We affirm the congregational commitment. By official action the 'congregation enrolls' in the program and invests substantial funds in its support. Thus the program must be regarded as a major ministry of the congregation, not marginal and incidental as with many adult education programs."<sup>37</sup>

3. The Training Program for Pastors and Lay Teachers. The Bethel Series is a tremendous leadership training program. First, the minister or professional staff person receives training in the two-week summer Orientation Clinic. Then he spends about eighteen months training a sizable class of lay persons to become teachers. They in turn teach the classes for the whole congregation. That's far reaching leadership training! It is described in Chapter Three.

The key role of the professional staff is strengthened. He or she is trained and trains the volunteer leadership. "Thus the professional staff person is helped to carry out his or her teaching responsibility with the people, and is very supportive of

---

<sup>37</sup> Personal report enclosed in letter from Rev. Melvin G. Talbert, General Secretary of the Board of Discipleship, May 9, 1975, entitled "An Evaluation of the Bethel Series", and composed by George Koehler, Warren Hartman, and Horace Weaver, Administrators in the Division of Education. (Appendix H).

the program. These are great assets for any educational program."<sup>38</sup>

Another strength right here is the quality of this training program. "A two-year program can have tremendous value, and far surpasses our normal approaches. The success of the Bethel program in enlisting persons on this basis demonstrates the readiness of lay people to take discipleship and leadership seriously. They will respond to clear and worthwhile demands."<sup>39</sup>

4. A systematic recruitment plan aimed at the total congregation. The Bethel Series does not settle for "the faithful few". It is aimed at bringing a large portion of the congregation into Bible study classes, and it includes a systematic plan for accomplishing this ambitious goal. Some of the techniques used, such as building the long-range "ground-swell", achieving a full enrollment by the end of the pre-enrollment period, and using progressive class scheduling, are valuable, and can be used with benefit in other major educational programs. These and other helpful ways of going about recruiting large numbers of people are presented in Chapter Four. The result of this is that church members accept a forty-week course as a reasonable expectation.

---

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

5. Administrative "Know How". The total package of administrative "know how" is perhaps the most distinctive and most valuable feature of the Bethel Series. It begins when ministers attend the Orientation Clinic and are trained to administer the program, step-by-step, throughout its four years. It continues in the Administrative Workshop right before the congregational phase. It is broadened in the teacher training sessions. It is supported by the regional Teachers' Banquet. This training in administration includes specific objectives for each phase of the four-year program, and recommended procedures for achieving those objectives. This is covered in Chapter Five. The administrative "know how" includes some of the most helpful techniques and insights offered by the Bethel Series.

6. A follow-up program. The "New Dimensions" program is a strength, for it can come after the Bethel Series, and maintain the high level of adult participation that has been achieved. The value of this program is presented in Chapter Six.

7. Hermeneutical Principles. The stated hermeneutical principles of the Bethel Series are a strength. However, they are not taken seriously enough, and are in fact undercut by operative, unstated principles, as I have made clear in Chapter Seven. The result is that the hermeneutical slant of the Bethel Series ends up being

one of its major weaknesses!

8. Visual and Memory Aids. The technique of having a large, symbolic picture for each class session is a tremendous help to the students in remembering what they have learned. In Chapter Seven I take issue with these pictures, not because they are ineffective in aiding memory, for they are effective, but because they are not comprehensive enough in covering the main themes of the Bible. As the students study chapter after chapter, and book after book of the Bible, the pictures are a real aid in lifting up major themes and helping the students to remember them.

The same can be said of listing the concepts discovered in the reading, putting them on flash cards, and checking their retention with quizzes from time to time. This is a real aid to the student in organizing and remembering the mass of biblical material. The problem is that major texts have been ignored, as in the prophets and psalms, while some trivial and questionable "concepts" have been included.

The use of pictures and memorization of concepts are strengths of the Bethel Series, although they need to be revised and augmented to include the major themes of the whole Bible.

9. A package of colorful curriculum materials.

At the first session of the class the students receive their colorful Bethel Series binders, and the first lesson to put in it. Then week by week they receive an assignment sheet, and the next chapter. The material is clearly printed, on good paper, and includes the color picture that goes with each lesson. The curriculum materials also include an occasional quiz sheet, plus the large, almost three foot by four foot, teaching pictures for display in the classroom. These pictures match the ones the students have in their books. This is a complete curriculum package. It has already been received by the pastor or teacher and explained in the summer Orientation Clinic.

Many teachers find it a great strength to be able to proceed with this complete package. I considered the colorful curriculum package to be enough of an advantage that I went ahead and used it, even though I felt that it needed to be supplemented and revised in a number of ways. The additions and revisions that I feel are needed, are set forth in the next chapter.

10. Results. These are many and varied, but here I list--conservatively--several of the most beneficial results of the Bethel Series. The pastor gains a new sense of direction, and a helpful Bible study program that deserves and receives his leadership. A trained core group of teachers is another valuable result. A

great link of fellowship is forged among them, and with their pastor teacher.

A large number of the members of the congregation get into Bible study classes. They and all the participants in the program may be confronted by God's Word and life-changing call. The originators of the Bethel Series put much emphasis upon the fact that their program has "succeeded" in more than 3,000 congregations.<sup>40</sup> These are a few of the ways in which it succeeds in producing significant results.

11. Administrative Service. The Adult Christian Education Foundation, which offers the Bethel Series, also supplies helpful administrative services as needed. For example, before a church enters the program, they supply a Presentation Booklet (See Appendix Y) explaining the program. They provide field representatives to present it. More unusual, during the program, they provide administrative service in that they give advice on how to solve any problems that arise. They give fast service in providing materials ordered from them.

These services are provided by the Adult Christian Education Foundation, 313 Price Place, Box 5305, Madison, Wisconsin, 53705. This is a corporation that was first established to handle the Bethel Series, and has since

---

<sup>40</sup> Letter from Hal Hueschen, Director, Bethel Series, November, 1974.

developed other curriculum materials. When I visited their headquarters in 1973, their staff consisted of three teachers, two administrators, three assistants, two field representatives with forty-seven area representatives, and two secretaries. The annual budget was \$510,000 that year. For their Orientation Clinics they were renting university facilities for dormitories, dining, and classroom space. Their staff and program have been growing since then, and they have recently begun construction of their own training facility on the lake shore at Madison.

As you can see, the Bethel Series has many strengths. It also has major weaknesses. We look at them now.

#### Weaknesses

1. The goal of this Bible study is not high enough. The "Description of the Bethel Series and a Statement of Its Objectives" announces "Neither a survey course nor a depth study, The Bethel Series simply attempts to acquaint the student with the basic fundamentals of both Old and New Testament narratives."<sup>41</sup>

I find this goal, for a program aimed at being the Bible study program of a congregation, to be inadequate

---

<sup>41</sup> "A Description of the Bethel Series and a Statement of Its Objectives", paper distributed at Orientation Clinic, summer of 1973. (Appears as Appendix T).

at three points. First, in the Bethel Series the "narratives" include Genesis and the "historical" books of the Bible. Job, Psalms, plus other Writings, and the major thrust of the prophets are left out! This does not do justice to the whole Bible. Second, I have the same objection to the statement that it is not a survey course. If it is not a complete survey of the Bible, then it is not adequate to be the basic course.

Third, it lacks sufficient experiential grounding. It is one thing to know the story or "concepts" of the Bible, and a fairly trivial thing at that. A more adequate goal of Bible study is to hear God speak to us through the Bible and to respond in faith and action. That kind of awareness of what God is doing in our lives NOW is an essential part of an adequate Bible study program.

## 2. The hermeneutical principles are undercut.

The stated hermeneutical principles of the Bethel Series could be helpful, but they are not followed diligently enough. Moreover, unstated principles are revealed in the curriculum material, and they create a number of hermeneutical difficulties. I have pointed this out in Chapter Seven.

I believe the hermeneutical shortcomings of the Bethel Series are its major weakness. They are so serious that a revision of the Bethel Series is necessary if it is to be used. More about this in the next chapter.

3. Overdependence upon the lecture method of presentation. The Bethel policy statement says, "As to method of presentation, the study at this juncture leans toward the lecture method, but does not discourage discussion."<sup>42</sup> That's as far as they go. They can see the possibility of some discussion, but that's about it. They don't seem to be aware of a wide variety of educational experiences that could become aids to the learning situation.

One pastor, reflecting on this need after teaching the Series, had this request: "More instruction is needed for classroom procedures and teaching methods. Instruction could have been given on small group work, discussion, and other learning experiences."<sup>43</sup> There could be much "discovery learning" if the Bethel Series was not narrowed to word exchange alone, in lectures and discussions.

4. Lack of experiential grounding. The Bethel emphasis upon learning biblical concepts needs to be balanced by personal reflection as to how this is changing one's outlook and style of life. Otherwise what's the use? Without this, a teacher cannot even be sure that

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Rev. Dick Northup, "Evaluation of the Bethel Series," January 23, 1975.

the student even understands the concepts he has learned, let alone has been influenced by them. One teacher tried to correct this by starting off each class session with a sharing time in which the students could report how, if at all, they had related the material studied, to their life during the week.<sup>44</sup>

5. Lack of administrative procedures for the later stages of the program. Sometimes the Bethel Series goes great for the first three years, and then gradually fades. In fact, I have the impression from talking to a few pastors that it seldom maintains the excitement of the first two years. That's one reason I want to be sure that the basic course gives full coverage of the Bible, for the first time around will be as far as many folks go.

This lack showed up in what happened in La Habra. The first three years of the Series went strong. This included teacher training and the first wave of full congregational classes. Then, "We have found it very difficult to start any new classes after the first new class was started. We have not been able to recruit any additional Bethel Teacher-Trainees either."<sup>45</sup> The Bethel

---

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Letter from Rev. Richard E. Northup, Minister of Education, La Habra United Methodist Church, December 9, 1975.

Series is long-range enough to project the beginning of a second teacher-training class as the third year begins. The problem seems to be that after the earlier burst this isn't easy to get going, and the administrative help from the Adult Christian Education Foundation has not yet come forth with enough specific techniques to see churches over this hump.

Rev. Dick Northup, reflecting on this need, feels that the program could be strengthened by two things: (1) instructions regarding the recruitment of new Bethel Teacher-Trainees, and (2) instructions for following through to recruit people for all of the later Bethel congregational classes.<sup>46</sup> Bethel Series administrative "know how" is extremely complete for beginning the program. Perhaps additional help is needed for continuing it.

Yes, there are many strengths in the Bethel Series, and some considerable weaknesses. Wouldn't it be ideal if we could use the strengths, and find ways to correct the weaknesses? That is our hope in the next chapter.

---

<sup>46</sup> Rev. Dick Northup, "Evaluation of the Bethel Series", January 23, 1975.

### RECONSTRUCTION: BETHEL PLUS

The Bethel Series has many strengths, as we have seen, and several real weaknesses. It would be ideal if we could go with its strengths, and correct its weaknesses. This is what we are currently trying to do as we use the Bethel Series in the Scottsdale United Methodist Church. We are using the strong parts of the program, such as the basic commitments required, the high quality of the training program, and the effective administrative "know how". The weak parts of the program, such as the hermeneutical slant, the overdependence upon the lecture method, and the lack of experiential grounding, we are doing extensive work to correct. We are dealing with these weaknesses by adding the full range of textual material, a variety of learning experiences, and time in which we share our efforts to relate our study to our daily life. Let's look at how this "Bethel Plus" reconstruction is going, and take a closer look at some of the elements in it.

#### Go With the Bethel Series Strengths

The pastor was already committed to Bible study as a fundamental program for the whole church. The Board of the church voted "to put Bible study at the center of the life of our congregation", and enrolled the Scottsdale

United Methodist Church in the Bethel Series on March 31, 1975. This commitment was backed "with \$1,300 of our money to enroll, to send our Associate Minister to the two-week Orientation Clinic, and for us to receive the two year's worth of teacher training materials." With these basic commitments the program began with strong backing from the pastors and the lay leadership of the church. During the summer the Associate Minister received his training in Madison. The Senior Pastor had previously received the training.

The ministers began to tell the congregation about the Bethel Series in the fall. The immediate goal was to recruit 20 capable adults who would make a commitment to study the Bible for two years, and then teach it for two years--a major commitment of 4 years of their time! Instead of playing down this commitment, it was set out in full detail.<sup>47</sup> Some leaders said it would be impossible to find 20 people who would make such a big commitment. Meanwhile personal notes were going out from the ministers, "I believe that YOU have what it takes to become a Bethel Bible Series Teacher-Trainee."<sup>48</sup> Personal interviews began. During December the goal was passed:

---

<sup>47</sup> Recruitment letter to members of Scottsdale United Methodist Church, August 27, 1975. (Appears in full as Appendix G).

<sup>48</sup> Personal letter to prospects, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, September 23, 1975. (Appears in full as Appendix F).

On Sunday morning, January 4, 1976, the first class of 22 Teacher-Trainees was introduced and dedicated in the morning worship service. It was a great day for the congregation as they saw the impossible being accomplished! The weekly teacher training class began with full attendance, and a high level of enthusiasm in mid-January. To this point, we have been following, step-by-step, the effective and well thought-out program which is a part of the Bethel Series. Now we move on to some of the pluses that we needed to add to strengthen the Bethel Series.

#### Add Needed Pluses

1. The whole Bible. When we began to study the Bible we had to make changes in the Bethel Series to correct its weaknesses. Indeed, we had to make changes some time before the first session, to work out an overview aimed at doing justice to the whole Bible, rather than leave out books and major themes as the Bethel Series does.

This was the first change we made: we decided to add the books of the Bible left out in the Bethel Series, and to cover the complete Bible. Put in simplest terms, to accomplish this, in the same period of time, we decided to move right along through the Bethel Series material, taking a lesson in each session (rather than several

sessions on one lesson), so we would have sessions left over in which to cover the books not included in the Bethel Series. We believe this coverage of all the books is necessary in a program that talks about being a study of the Bible "from Genesis through Revelation". This may be the only chance that many of our people have to get a complete view of the Bible.

2. A multi-faceted goal. No model of Bible study which we had experienced seemed adequate to the two of us who were to teach this class. Each style lacked something. College courses on "The Bible as Literature" lacked the conviction of faith, and a call for any kind of decision beyond mild curiosity. Bible courses in theological school, had a glimmer of faith--especially in research, but not much dynamic relationship with life today. So-called "Depth Bible Study Groups" tended toward wild personalism without any textual or historical understanding.

We decided that this class needed to have several basic ingredients: (1) Bible Study, (2) Personal Growth, (3) Christian Community, and (4) Help the Congregation Achieve 1-3. These goals for the class were written on the blackboard in this outline form at the first class session. The teacher added that this Bible study was to be both thorough and Christian: thorough in that we would go from Genesis through Revelation, and use the whole

range of possible resources, historical, literary, and so forth to throw light on the Bible. It would also be Christian in that we would be studying the Bible from the position of faith, from within its Judeo-Christian tradition.

We acknowledged that if this Bible study did not result in any changes in our personal life style, or in the creation of Christian community among us, we would consider it a failure. Finally, we recognized that we are in the study not only for ourselves, but to be trained so we can also help the members of our congregation achieve the first three goals.

3. Serious application of the hermeneutical principles. We aim to follow through on the stated hermeneutical principles of the Bethel Series, and not allow them to be undercut by the unstated principles. For example, in the first class session, after spending some time reading and discussing the first three chapters of Genesis, we distributed a sheet listing and explaining the five basic hermeneutical principles.<sup>49</sup>

Again, in the second session, after bearing witness to how the Genesis story has shaped some of our personal convictions about life now (ecology, sex, etc.)

---

<sup>49</sup> "Principles of Biblical Interpretation", paper distributed in class, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, January 22, 1976. (Appears in full as Appendix B).

we distributed a sheet that describes "the period of collection" (900 B.C. to 100 A.D.) of the Old Testament documents, and explains a bit of what it means that they were written in Hebrew.<sup>50</sup> Hermeneutically, I believe this is more to the point than the doctrinal question introduced in the Bethel Series material about "How were First Adam and Second Adam alike?" Our first aim is to get into the text itself, and then to use every historical and literary insight available to help us understand what the author is saying. We are trying to follow through on the stated hermeneutical principles of the Bethel Series.

What about the teaching pictures? After some misgivings, we are using the pictures in a modified way, and finding them helpful. We do not let them dominate the class session nor are they displayed or explained at the beginning of the class. First we do textual study, and draw upon various resources and learning experiences. Then after the break, we deal with the question, "How do you organize this material and remember it?" The picture is presented then, "straight" (according to the instructions), and after that people are encouraged to tell of other ways they picture the content of the session and organize it in their memory. Without being dominated by the concepts in the pictures, the students do find

---

<sup>50</sup> "The Old Testament", paper distributed in class, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, January 29, 1976. (Appears in full as Appendix C).

the pictures helpful as one way to remember part of what they have studied.

We balance the domination of the selected "concepts" in the Bethel Series, in a similar way. We note the selected concepts on the assignment sheets, put them on flash cards as prescribed, and use them in answering the quiz questions. Students who answer the questions from memory are commended, but others do the test "open book", as in everyday life where you can use everything you can get your hands on. Even without heavy emphasis upon them, the students do remember concepts which they understand and feel are important.

We will have to see later what success we have in providing balance for the heavily dogmatic structure of the curriculum, especially in the New Testament. Our approach will be to look at the text first, and to continue to "sniff out" doctrinal concerns which are not biblical.

4. A variety of learning experiences. The Bethel Series is weak in that it's method of presentation is basically lectures, with some discussion, but narrowed too much toward mere word exchanges.

We are interested in adding "discovery learning experiences" that heighten learning and increase the joy of it. For example, my colleague came up with a powerful fantasy that helped us discover the deeper meaning of the

"image of God" concept in Genesis. After the class had studied the text, and a short article on "Man In The Image of God", <sup>51</sup> he had the class members close their eyes and become aware of their own breathing and sensations. He read them the concluding section of the image of God paper, entitled "You Are Made In The Image of God". Then he added something like this: "Before you open your eyes, you see an old Hebrew coming toward you and speaking in Hebrew, but you understand that he is saying, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.' You are created in the image of God. Therefore, because of this you will . . ." Then he had the students open their eyes, and readjust to being together. All of this leads to this question: "Did any of you hear words that completed that last sentence?" "Yes, I heard that because I am created in God's image therefore I will . . . seek God," reported one student. Others told the words they heard completing the sentence.

I call this "discovery learning", for in the example above the technique used helped the students discover for themselves the deep response which is called forth when we do realize that we are created in God's image.

---

<sup>51</sup> "Man In The Image of God", paper distributed in class, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, February 5, 1976. (Appears in full as Appendix D).

In one session, the students were roped together and taken to the basement to sit in the dark and listen to readings on bondage, until they finally did something about the call that kept coming from outside, "Let my people go!" Their discussion was on what they had discovered about bondage and deliverance.

In another session, the students were the Cecil B. DeMille staff, listening to four different dramatic, awe-inspiring musical selections. Then they discussed "Which selection should be used for the Mt. Siani scene, and why?"

At other times, the students work in small research groups, discussion groupings, or special task groups. For example, in our final session dealing with Genesis, the class was divided up into six drama groups (with everyone in on the action) to present one minute dramas of decisive incidents in Genesis. The first group was to be Adam, Eve, and God, and present the incident in Genesis 2:15-17, 3:6-8. The second group was to present the Abraham/Isaac incident in Genesis 22:9-14. The third group was to do Jacob/Esau, Scene 1, Genesis 25:29-34. The fourth group was Jacob/Esau, Scene 2, Genesis 33:1-4. The fifth group was Joseph/Reuben/and two other brothers, doing Genesis 37:17-24. The sixth group was Joseph and his brothers, Genesis 45:4-15, 50:19-20.

The drama groups had ten minutes to decide who would play which parts and to work out their play. They

were really getting into the text, but this was just the beginning. Before the plays were presented to the total group, the class members were given a sheet, "Getting Into Biblical Incidents In Genesis" on which to record three things about each incident: (1) How were the personal relationships before this incident?, (2) What happened in this incident?, and (3) How were the personal relationships after this incident? Then the dramas were presented, with note taking after each one. Next, what we had aimed at: reflection and discovery. "What do you discover as you look at your notes on these incidents?" "Some, like Abraham, were straight all the way through: he was in harmony with God and Isaac before, he acted obediently, and he was in harmony afterwards too", replied one student. Other students had other things they had discovered. We also had fun discovering hidden dramatic talent in our class members.

Yes, we have short lectures, and a variety of other experiences in our class session. Our class session<sup>52</sup> usually included at least the following items. The class opens with a devotional thought or prayer by one of the class members, followed by the teacher's presentation of the section of scripture for the night, plus student sharing about the assignment and

---

<sup>52</sup> Plan for 4th Session, used by co-teachers, Scottsdale United Methodist Church, February 12, 1976. (Appears in full as Appendix E).

how they are relating the study to their daily life. Then comes a break, refreshments supplied by a student, and informal time. The last half of the session is used for a brief presentation of the teaching picture by a student, and a major block of time for some "discovery" method of getting into the text. The session ends with the passing out of the next chapter and the assignment sheet that goes with it, plus a pairing of the students for contact during the week, and a group benediction selected from the text of the evening.

This is the usual mix for the class, though sometimes other things are added. We use a variety of educational and group experiences aimed at meeting all four of our class goals (set forth in No. 2 above). Learning is heightened and made more enjoyable by the variety of learning experiences.

5. Experiential grounding. I was not excited about merely reading Bible stories and learning concepts. Two of our class goals are personal growth, and the development of Christian community. To this end, in each class session there is time set aside for students to respond to some such question as "How has your study tied in with your life this week?" Reply, "Oh, my college-age son was home and you'd be amazed how our study worked right into our discussion!"

Notice that just before the break the students

begin their discussion of how they are getting along with their assignment and with relating it to their daily life. That discussion continues on into the break.

The teachers also witness to how their attitudes and life style have been changed by the themes of the text, when this is the case. Other times, they make the same point of experiential grounding by pointing to other individuals or groups who have responded to the text.

The habit of presenting the historical background of the text itself, with stress upon the decisions and actions of the people then, helps to ground the study in experience.

6. Creation of Christian community. I believe that Biblical study should influence the quality of relationships within the group, and lead to ministry to others. We do several things about this. At the first session of the class, name tags are used, and some time is spent to get acquainted and make sure everyone feels at home. Thereafter, every class session includes time for the students to share what's happening to them, and to respond to one another.

The work of the class is shared. Students sign up for three different classroom assignments. Each week a different student gives the devotional thought at the beginning of the class. Another student provides the

refreshments. A third student explains the teaching picture to the class. Everyone has contributions to make, and is needed and appreciated in this system.

Just before the close of each class session, students are "paired" with another student with whom they are to make contact during the week, and talk about how the study is going. After class they decide when and how this will be done: by phone, coffee, or what not. This pairing changes each week. Thus each student gets acquainted with the other twenty-one students in the class. This also provides a means of care and accountability. If a student is sick, we hear about it. Then his next partner takes notes, collects the next chapter for him, and catches him up on what went on in class. This is the beginning of community.

The result of these procedures is that the sense of Christian community is strong within the class. Later, as we plan our ministry to the whole congregation, and prepare to teach the Bible classes for the congregational phase, the outward thrust of our Christian community will become very clear.

### Conclusion

The Bethel Series was used effectively to give a real boost to the adult education program of the La Habra United Methodist Church. Even with its weaknesses, its strengths have been a help to many congregations.

If it is possible to go forward with the strengths of the Bethel Series, and to correct its weaknesses, it can be of even greater help to us in Scottsdale, and to congregations all across the country!

**APPENDIX**

**APPENDIX A**

# **Study One**

## **BIBLICAL BASIS**

***Genesis 1-2***

***Psalm 8***

***Psalm 24***

***©Adult Christian Education Foundation 1961***

## ***Creation and its Concepts***

### **Picture number one and its symbolism:**

*Hands lifting the earth out of hazy mist* — God created the heavens and the earth

*Halo of white light circling the upper circumference of the earth* — God created all things good

*Fingers opened on the right hand* — God relinquished the earth to man as a gift

*White links attached to the arms and globe* — God binds Himself to His creation

*Lettered banner flying on the earth* — God claims ownership of that which He has fashioned

*Man grasping the staff* — God owns man

*Banner furling around the body of the man* — Man has freedom only within limits

*Halo of white light shining behind man's head* — God created man in His own image

*Man holding crown in left hand* — Man is the crown of creation

*First jewel in the crown* — Man is called to replenish the earth

*Second jewel in the crown* — Man is called to subdue the earth

*Third jewel in the crown* — Man is called to dress, till and keep the earth

*Fourth jewel in the crown* — Man is called to have dominion over the earth



## 1

# *Creation and its Concepts*

**God Created** - - - - - "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is the magnificent theme on which the Bible begins. All creation is linked with a Creator. A world is born. A universe is fashioned in which there is plan, purpose and direction. Behind this majestic venture stands an almighty CREATOR-GOD, who has the power to mold a world out of void and nothingness.

**Gen. 1:1-2:3**  
**Neh. 9:6**  
**Ps. 102:25**  
**Heb. 11:3**

## HOW DID GOD CREATE THE EARTH?

Shall we press the Scriptures for an answer to that question? No! The message of the Bible is religious in thrust, not scientific. If we attempt to make a science log-book out of a message which is fundamentally religious in emphasis, we commit error. Such error is a part of the historical record.

- When thinking men first declared their belief in a round world, religious Biblicists with more zeal than knowledge used Psalm 104:2b to prove the round-world theorizers wrong.
- Well meaning Christians once attempted to deny the validity of the Copernican theory on the strength of such passages as Psalm 93:1b; Psalm 104:5; Ecc. 1:5; and Psalm 19:4-6.
- Columbus was assailed with quotations from the book of Genesis, the Psalms of David, the Prophets and the Epistles to prove the impiety of his belief in an undiscovered world.

Lest we repeat the errors of the past and create problems between science and religion where there are none, let us underscore this premise in our study of Genesis 1.

**THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE IS RELIGIOUS IN THRUST, NOT SCIENTIFIC.**

## **God Created All Things Good**

**Gen. 1:4; 1:10; 1:12; 1:18;  
1:21; 1:25; 1:31**

- - - We live in a universe which has the stamp of quality upon it. Nothing fashioned by God is evil in itself. Creation is good.

**This view expressed in Genesis 1:31 is not universally embraced by all men.**

- Religions, other than Christian, propound a totally different view on the make-up of creation:
  - a. Christian vs. Buddhist
  - b. Christian vs. Mohammedan
- Much of the record left us by the Greco-Roman philosophical schools declares a dualism which regards spirit as good and matter as evil:
  - a. Hermiticism
  - b. Asceticism
  - c. Stoicism
  - d. Gnosticism
- Within the Christian family itself there has been evidence of a misunderstanding of the goodness of creation:
  - a. The monastic emphasis on separation from the world during the pre-reformation era
  - b. The contemporary religious emphasis upon a world which is evil in and by itself
  - c. The Pietistic tendency to identify evil with things rather than with the misuse of things

Creation is good! Yet all good things must have upon them divine controls and must be used for their divinely intended end, lest gift become curse and good become evil.

#### **Questions**

1. Is self interest good?
2. Is the magnetic attraction between sexes good?
3. Can the Christian form a disdain for the world?

**God's Good Earth  
Was Relinquished To  
Man As A Gift**

**Gen. 1:29-30; 2:9; 2:18  
Matt. 5:5**

... A literal paradise awaited the first inhabitants of God's good earth. Men, created in God's image and in His likeness, inherited a domain which was compatible to every human need.

In lilting poetic meter, the Bible declares that the Heavenly Father fashioned His world in terms of His children's needs, and when all was ready the earth was relinquished to man as a gift. Man was meant to inherit the earth.

## **God Binds Himself To His Creation**

**Isaiah 43:2-3**

**Psalm 23**

**Psalm 46:1-3**

**Psalm 91:11-13**

**Psalm 121**

**I Peter 5:7**

- - - Neither the world nor man who inhabits it is isolated from the continuing care and concern of God. By virtue of being Creator, God has a consuming interest in that which He has fashioned. He watches over His creation, guards it, protects it, preserves it, loves it and sustains it.

### **Implications**

- Man need not think of himself as an accidental, isolated child plotting his way alone upon this earth.  
**GOD WALKS WITH HIM!**
- When anxieties, sorrows or perplexing problems threaten to engulf man with darkness, God stands ready to offer light which will dispel this darkness.
- The welfare of this universe does not swing upon the precarious hinges of fate or of chance. God, who made the earth, governs it.

### **Questions**

1. What marked difference of understanding exists between the Christian and the deist on this matter of God's personal involvement in the needs of His creation?
2. What might human reason offer in answer to the question, does God care?

## **God Claims Ownership Of All He Has Fashioned**

**Gen. 1:1**

**I Chron. 29:10-14**

- - - God's claim to ownership is implied by the fact that HE IS CREATOR! The inhabitants of the earth may possess legal rights to a plot of ground. They may utilize and appropriate for themselves every good gift which God has provided, but nothing within the framework of God's pronouncements permits mortals to say of any given thing, "IT IS MINE". The earth and all things on it belong to God. He, as Creator, is owner.

## **God Owns Man**

**Ps. 24:1**

- - - Man, too, is embraced by this claim. Body, soul, mind and talents all bear upon them the stamp of divine ownership. We are not our own. We are owned.

### **Question**

How does a man's awareness of ownership affect his use of any given thing?

## **Man Has Freedom Only Within Limits**

**Gen. 2:16-17**

**Ex. 20:1-17**

- - - Insofar as man belongs to God, he is not a free agent to do with his life what he wills. Birth ushers a man into an arena of responsibility to God. This inherited responsibility puts limitations upon man's freedom. Biblical religion asserts that life upon this earth can be orderly and meaningful only insofar as there is a clear understanding that God is sovereign and man is subject. The restrictions in Eden and the moral law handed down from Mt. Sinai make it unmistakeably evident that mortals are called to walk this earth within the confines of "thou shalts" and "thou shalt nots".

It is true that men may choose to live outside and beyond the realm of freedom permitted by God, but the inevitable consequence of such behavior is bondage, not freedom.

### Questions

1. What might the possible human reactions be to the Biblical assumption of a "limited freedom"?
2. What is meant by the Christian concept that God restricts only because He loves?
3. How does restraint serve to protect life from deterioration and decay?

## Man Is Created In God's Image

Gen. 1:26-27

5:1

9:6

James 3:9

- - - The beauty and magnificence of the whole creation would have been wasted had not God fashioned a creature who could appreciate it. Should a rose waste its beauty on an insensitive being? Should a twinkling star in the blue heavens fail to fascinate the minds of men? Should the sound of the winds have no enchantment? Such would have been the case had God made men like dead and lifeless stones without spirit, soul or senses. Genesis 1 lays before us the golden theme that God matched a beautiful creation with a creature who could appreciate it . . . MAN!

Moulded in the image of His maker, man came into this domain endowed with unique capacities:

- an emotional creature who could love and be loved
- a rational creature who could master his domain
- a moral creature who could respond to his master
- a creature with a mind and a memory and a will

### Questions

1. The image concept has profound implications for the man who seeks to understand his own basic nature. Why?

2. Would it be true to say that God's nature and man's nature are alike in any way?

3. Can we see any relationship between the image concept and the fact that a man experiences:

a sense of fulfillment as he engages in a creative venture?

a sense of well-being as he engages in self-giving?

a sense of satisfaction as he looks upon a work of quality?

a sense of guilt as he participates in moral infractions?

a sense of frustration as he separates himself from God?

## Man Is The Crown Of God's Creation

Gen. 1:26

- - - No part of the creation takes on more importance in God's eyes than man! He is the very crown of the creative process: the chief object of God's saving love; the creature upon whom He centers His attention and concern; the workman He calls to share in the continuation of His creative activity upon the earth.

**Psalm 8:3-8**

Dignity befits those whom God has made in His image and in His likeness. Man holds an exalted position in God's eyes:

"When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established;

what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou dost care for him?

Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor.

Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet, all the sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the sea . . .".

**Questions**

1. Do all men have dignity and worth in God's eyes, or is this exalted position reserved only for a chosen few?
2. Does man do either God or himself justice by thinking too little of himself?
3. Is it possible to over-emphasize the depraved nature of man?

**Man Is Called To Replenish The Earth**

Gen. 1:28

Jewel one

- - - Initially, the power of creation belonged only to God Himself. Now, however, we see God seeking to share His creative capacities with man. Through the divinely ordained institution of marriage, people upon the earth are called to participate in an ongoing creative venture. Life must bring forth life. God said to man, "Be fruitful and multiply . . . replenish the earth."

**Man Is Called To Subdue The Earth**

Gen. 1:28

Jewel two

- - - This great rich world will offer its inhabitants the full measure of its blessings and its benefits, only insofar as man uses all his powers to develop and appropriate what is here. Man is called to probe, search, discover and utilize all the rich fruits which the earth holds within itself. For this reason the informed Christian recognizes that every avenue of scientific inquiry and research is under God's divine sanction. The domain on which man lives waits to be mastered! God said to man, ". . . subdue it . . .".

**Man Is Called To Dress, Till And Keep —**

Gen. 2:15

Jewel three

- - - A book, a painting, a child, A WORLD will deteriorate without proper care. So when man inherited this world, he found that he had won two great things for himself:

- a. a great and beautiful garden, rich in treasure and resource,
- b. a responsibility to take care of the garden in which he dwells.

The man of God then has a deep concern as to how he uses this earth. He exercises caution and care in his use of the soils. He will not be found guilty of recklessly exploiting the resources of the earth. He will seek to protect and preserve that which is precious so that all generations of God's people may enjoy the good bounties of the land. God instructed man to . . . "till the earth and keep it".

**Man Is Called  
To Have Dominion —**

Gen. 1:28  
Psalm 8:6-8  
Jewel four

- - - All things are put under man's feet.
- The lower forms of life are to be subject to him.
- He is to be God's designated keeper of the garden.
- He is to be master of all that he surveys.
- He is to be God's co-worker in carrying on the creative activity on this earth.
- God said to man, ". . . have dominion . . .".

## ASSIGNMENT 1

Distribute upon completion of introductory meeting.

**READ GENESIS 1:1- 2:24.** Then answer these statements true or false.

Circle T. or F.

Genesis 1 . . . .

- a. is designed to tell us everything about creation. (T. F.)
- b. says nothing about the quality of creation. (T. F.)
- c. indicates that God had man's needs in mind when He created the earth. (T. F.)
- d. infers that man and the animals are very much alike. (T. F.)
- e. declares that man was given some specific responsibilities when God placed him on the earth. (T. F.)

Genesis 2 . . . .

- a. declares that God put no limits upon man's freedom. (T. F.)
- b. says that it is God's responsibility to dress and till the earth. (T. F.)

**READ PSALM 8**

- a. This psalm suggests that the individual has very little worth in God's eyes. (T. F.)

**READ PSALM 23, PSALM 121 and PSALM 65:5-13**

- a. These psalms must have been written by Deists. (T. F.)

**MEMORIZE THESE CONCEPTS AND THE CHAPTERS  
IN WHICH THEY ARE FOUND**

1. All things created good ..... Gen. 1
2. Man with dominion over the earth ..... Gen. 1
3. Divine intentions ..... Gen. 2
4. The fall of man ..... Gen. 3
5. Brother's keeper ..... Gen. 4
6. The flood ..... Gen. 7
7. The curse of Ham ..... Gen. 9
8. Tower of Babel ..... Gen. 11
9. Blessed to be a blessing ..... Gen. 12
10. Separation within ..... Gen. 13  
(Abraham and Lot)
11. Hagar and Ishmael ..... Gen. 16
12. Circumcision instituted ..... Gen. 17
13. Moabite and Ammonite origin ..... Gen. 19
14. Patriarch Isaac ..... Gen. 21
15. Test of obedience ..... Gen. 22

\* \* \* \*

**READ THE FIRST TWENTY-FIVE CHAPTERS OF GENESIS**

NAME.....

Part I Tell what chapter contains the following:

- ..... 1. Oppression
- ..... 2. Israel a Kingdom of Priests
- ..... 3. Patriarch Isaac
- ..... 4. Divine Intentions
- ..... 5. Instructions to build a tabernacle
- ..... 6. Golden Calf incident
- ..... 7. Blessed to be a blessing
- ..... 8. Crossing Red Sea
- ..... 9. Eye for an eye
- ..... 10. Future course of the 12 tribes
- ..... 11. Hagar and Ishmael
- ..... 12. Civil law and statutes for nomads
- ..... 13. Dinah-Hamor incident
- ..... 14. Visiting iniquities of fathers on children
- ..... 15. Roots of Israel and Edom rivalry
- ..... 16. Man with dominion over earth
- ..... 17. Passover feast as constant memorial
- ..... 18. Blessing of God has a condition attached
- ..... 19. Tower of Babel
- ..... 20. Non-separation of Esau line
- ..... 21. Birth of Moses
- ..... 22. The plagues in Egypt
- ..... 23. Joseph's administrative blessing
- ..... 24. Inauguration of the Priesthood
- ..... 25. The flood
- ..... 26. The ten commandments
- ..... 27. Unique purposes in supernatural event
- ..... 28. The fall of man
- ..... 29. God equips men for specific tasks
- ..... 30. Patriarchal line continues in Jacob
- ..... 31. Who is on the Lord's side?
- ..... 32. Joseph preserves a remnant
- ..... 33. God a constant presence in Israel's midst
- ..... 34. Deliberate ethnic separation  
(choice of Isaac's wife)
- ..... 35. Make no league with inhabitants of land
- ..... 36. Jethro advises Moses to delegate authority

Test 2 (Cont.)

- ..... 37. Separation within concept (Esau and Jacob)
- ..... 38. The number in the Exodus
- ..... 39. Fleeting repentance of Pharaoh
- ..... 40. Geographic separation in Goshen

Part II What concept is suggested by the following?

BE BRIEF

- 1. Open fingers on right hand (Pic 1)  
Example: God gives earth to man as a gift.
- 2. The four emeralds in the crown (Pic 1)
- 3. The light around upper circumference of globe (Pic 1)
- 4. Furling cloth entwined about man (Pic 1)
- 5. The mist (Pic 1)
- 6. Halo behind man's head (Pic 1)
- 7. Crown in man's hand (Pic 1)
- 8. Chain from God's wrist (Pic 1)
- 9. What is suggested by the fact that the chain is white? (Pic 1)
- 10. The note (Pic 2)
- 11. The four fingers beneath bar of note (Pic 2)
- 12. Man facing hand of God (Pic 2)
- 13. Extended hands of big man (Pic 2)
- 14. Extended hands of small figure (Pic 2)
- 15. Vine twining around note (Pic 2)
- 16. What part of Pic 3 suggests man in revolt?
- 17. What part of Pic 3 suggests idea of disobedience?
- 18. What is suggested by black sky and rugged peaks in background? (Pic 3)
- 19. What does broken note on back of lesser figure signify? (Pic 3)
- 20. What concept is suggested by note piercing man's side? (Pic 3)
- 21. What does the broken note in the earth symbolize? (Pic 3)
- 22. What is the Biblical concept symbolized by the cracked earth? (Pic 3)
- 23. What is the significant change in the image concept evident in Pic 3?

Part III TRUE AND FALSE

- 1. The basic purpose of Genesis 1 is to describe HOW God created the earth. .....
- 2. The Christian is obligated to hold a kind of disdain for the world because he knows that things of the earth are basically evil. .....
- 3. The continuation of harmony in Eden was contingent upon obedience. .....
- 4. Man could have remained in his Edenic bliss had he used all the powers available to him. .....
- 5. "My sins are my business and are no concern of anyone else." .....
- 6. We will be able in this course of study to discover where evil came from and why God permitted it. .....

PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION**1. Principle of Hebrew versus Greek Thought Forms****A. Use of Words: concrete vs. abstract**

Hebrew, concrete & pictorial: "She flied around like a cat chasing her tail."  
 Greek, abstract & rational: "Isn't she a bit irrational recently?"

**B. Truth in pictorial vs. literal forms**

Hebrew, pictorial: "If the father eats onions and the mother garlic, don't expect the child to smell of sweet perfume!"

Greek, literal: "The father fails to convey the male imprint to the child, and the mother fails to give emotional support; no wonder the child is a delinquent."

**C. Interest in "why" vs. interest in "how"**

Hebrew is interested in the "why", the meaning and purpose of existence.  
 Greek is interested in "how", understanding the process of existence.

**D. Interest in "cargo" vs. interest in "vehicle"**

Hebrew is interested in the message of the story, the "cargo".

Greek is interested in the details of the story itself, in the "vehicle".  
 eg. - the Adam and Eve story: the main message vs. all the details.

**2. Literary principle (Truth can come in many different literary forms.)****A. Straight historical reports of events. eg. anointing King David, II Sam. 5****B. Poetic reporting of historical events. eg. song of Deborah, Judges 5****C. Allegory. eg. "a vine out of Egypt" is Israel, Psalm 80****D. Personification. eg. "mountains shall sing...", Isaiah 55:12****3. Historical principle (It helps to know the historical time and setting.)**

eg. 1 Cor. 11:5 Women are to cover their heads, because prostitutes did not in that day. Point is: women be careful not to be confused with prostitutes.

**4. Purpose principle**

The purpose of the Bible is religious: It deals with our right relationship with God, self, others, and world. It is a record of God and His people.

It is not all the information on every subject under the sun. As mentioned above, it's main thrust is religious rather than scientific. ('why' vs. "how")

**5. "Shelf principle**

Leave on the shelf your assumptions about the Scripture, and let the Bible speak for itself. (We are interested in "Biblical Theology" - which grows directly out of the text, rather than "Dogmatic Theology", which are preconceived ideas which are imposed upon the text.) Let the Bible speak to us.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

## 1. WRITTEN IN HEBREW

Remember that, except for a few scattered verses in Aramaic, these books were written in Hebrew. The Hebrew alphabet had no vowels and no punctuation! What is more, all the letters were run together. If you wrote that way in English, you would get something like this:

MTHLRDYRGDWHBRGHTYTFHLNDFGYP

TTFTHHSFBNDGYSHLLHVNTHRGDSBFRM

If you can guess where the vowels go, and what they are, and how to divide the words thus found, you can finally figure out that it reads:

I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, WHO BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT,  
OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE. YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.  
Ex. 20:2-3 (The Bible Speaks To You, by R. McAfee Brown, p. 29)

What would you make of the following?

PRSDNTGRFLDSLNSPPRSSFRPTDNFRTN

It could be "President Garfield sold newspaper issue for reputed new fortune", or "Pursued, N.T. Ogriflud sailed, newspapers say, for Europe today on Fauretania." It is amazing that translators of the O.T. made as few mistakes as they did. (The Study of the Bible, by E.C. Colwell, p. 88)

## 2. PERIOD OF COLLECTION: 900 B.C. to 100 A.D. (1,000 years!)

Perhaps as long ago as 900 B.C. (nearly 3,000 years ago!) an early writer compiled a series of stories about the tribes in southern Palestine. He used the Hebrew word for God which we would write "Yahweh", and which in Hebrew would be YHWH or JHVH. (leading this to be called the "J" document). Later, about 700 B.C. another account, called "E" because the author used Elohim for God, was written about the Northern tribes. The two were combined, producing "JE".

After the defeat of the North in 722 B.C. an author wrote an account in which he attributed this defeat to the faulty worship of God. In 621 B.C. this document was discovered in the Temple, and used to bring reforms. Much of this document we call Deuteronomy, "D". It was added to the others, plus a later priestly ("P") rewriting of it all, so that the first 6 books of the Bible (called "Hexateuch", meaning 6 Scrolls) are the total of "JEDP".

While this was going on, other books were being written. By about 200 B.C. most of the Old Testament material had been gathered together. The 39 Books are grouped under 3 general headings: 1) The Law, 2) The Prophets, and 3) The Writings.

A council of Jewish rabbis, meeting at Jamnia, Palestine about A.D. 90 or 100 decided that no more books should be admitted. They accepted the 39 books then in general use as sacred writings, and decided that no more books should be admitted to this official approved list.

## 3. HEBREW TRANSLATED INTO GREEK.

As time went on, more and more Jews learned Greek, and fewer and fewer could read Hebrew accurately. Therefore, beginning about 270 B.C. and extending up into the Christian era, Jewish scholars made translations of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. These documents were the ones used by the early Christians, and called the "Septuagint", to refer to the 70 scholars who supposedly produced the translation 70 days.

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Early on in Genesis, we find several references to the creation of man in the IMAGE OF GOD:

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness". - Gen. 1:26

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him." - Gen. 1:27

"When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God." - Gen. 5:1

"God made man in his own image." - Gen. 9:6

This concept is the foundation of the entire Old Testament understanding of man.

I. THE WORDS - Take a look at the meaning of the words.

"Image" - (Heb. Tseh'lem) means - Illusion, resemblance; hence a representative figure, image.

"Likeness" - (Heb. dem-ooth") means - resemblance, similar manner, concrete model, likeness.

Another term for "Image" or "Likeness" might be "tangible representation".

II. THE USE OF THE WORDS

- A. A quick reading (of Gen. 1:26f; 5:1-3; 9:6) shows that "image" and "likeness" are used interchangeably with reference to man and God as well as with man and man. Obviously there is no concern about precise definition. A broad point is being made, not a carefully spun philosophy.
- B. The context, not the word by itself, is crucial. What is the author trying to say? The author is speaking of the similarity or resemblance between God and man and of Adam and his son (Gen. 5:3). The similarity is in terms of personhood. The discussion is not about the material (matter, stuff) of which man and God are made.
- C. The point of the author is that man is unique in God's creation.

There are two clarifying distinctions to this point:

1. The distinction between man and animals (Gen. 1:24-25 compared with 1:26-27 note the "Then...of vs. 26). In contradiction to those who saw God in animal form. e.g. Egypt.
2. The distinction between man and God. There is no descending scale between God and man, each a little less divine than the last. There is God. There is man. Man is not as God. He is in his image, in his likeness.

"So God created man in his own image." The term "image" (as does the term "likeness") denotes a tangible representation.

Man is God's representative on earth. This representative function he exercises by replenishing, subduing, dressing, tilling and keeping, and having dominion over the earth.

This is the point in Gen. 1:26-2:17.

1. Man's unique relationship to God.
2. Man's unique ability to represent God.
3. Man's unique responsibility to God.

This completes the detailed look at the meaning of the phrase "image of God." But to help us understand what these truths imply, it will be helpful to look further at the biblical view of the nature of man. Especially as it pertains to the makeup of his person.

### III. YOU ARE MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

God created you "in his own image." This does not mean that you look like God in your physical body like that of a human being. It means that you have some of those things that are characteristic of God. You have freedom and a will of your own. You can love and forgive. You can plan and propose, and you can "think God's thoughts after him."

Thus you are not simply a physical organism; you are a person. As a person you are unique in all of God's creation.

In the first place, as a person you are self-conscious. You can think of yourself, as over against other persons and things. A person is the only living thing that can identify himself.

You have a brain like other animals. But in persons the brain functions in a unique way which we call the mind. Because you have a mind you can figure things out (reason), remember, imagine, make decisions, be aware of relationships, and communicate with other people.

Your mind is not something separate from the rest of you. It is directly related to and affected by your physical condition. You do not have two separate parts--a body and a mind--as is so often thought. Both of these are inseparably combined in what is called the person.

As a person, you have "personality." This is usually thought of as a complimentary term describing someone who impresses you. But everyone has personality--or, rather, is a personality. For personality is all that a person is, has been, and hopes to be. It refers to the total person--to the whole individual and all his reactions. Your personality is what you really are. It marks you as a unique person in God's creation.

You and Your Creator  
William Clifton Moore

## APPENDIX E

4th. Session

7:30 - Bob - Opening

1. Devotional thought - Marie Richards
2. Absentee reports?

7:40 - Rich - Disobedience and Guilt

1. Text - Genesis 3:6-10  
Reflect on text, sin & guilt.
2. Guilt vs. Sense of Guilt
3. Free Association on Guilt - Paper,  
1,000 Clowns & letter
4. Sharing

8:45 - Break - Refreshments - Jim Brooks

9:00 - Bob - PRONOUNCEMENT OF A DESTINY - Chap. 4 - Key to Bethel Series Text - Genesis 12:1-3

1. How extraordinary is this promise to a childless nobody! Can he believe that? Have faith in that promise?
2. Does someone have to be perfect to be chosen?
3. Chosen for what? For privilege, power, service, what? Where does chosen idea go wrong? Is Israel today . . . or USA today a chosen nation?  
"I WILL BLESS YOU" p. 30  
"SO THAT YOU WILL BE A BLESSING" p. 30

9:15 - Bob - PICTURE # 4 - Warren Niccum, Rich Rowe

9:20 - Bob - GROUPS - "CHOSEN?" - Discovery Learning Experience.

9:20 - Assignment - 4 corners & center

9:22 - Group Discussions

9:37 - Reports

9:52 - Reflection: What made it easy or hard to feel chosen?

9:57 - Rich - Pick up assignment 4 and lesson 5

Bob - Pairings

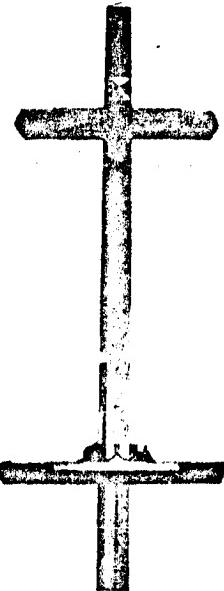
Rich - Benediction - Genesis 12:2

10:00 - Out & check with partner

-----  
"Think Hebrew" button  
Pictures: 3 & 4  
Goal Statement

Paper - Free Association on  
Guilt  
Assignment for "Chosen?" Groups

## APPENDIX F



## Scottsdale United Methodist Church

FILE

September 23, 1975

Dear John,

I believe that YOU have what it takes to become a Bethel Bible Series Teacher-Trainee. The B.B. Series is going to make a tremendous contribution to the spiritual life of this congregation. You can help to make this possible, and gain a solid Bible foundation for yourself. Also, the Trainees will become acquainted, and have a good time together in class. God will bless this group, and use it to bless others.

Please think and pray about becoming a Teacher-Trainee. In the near future, I will want to talk with you about it. You can phone me to set a time to talk it over, or I will contact you later. I assure you, it is worth the effort.

Sincerely,

Rev. Robert M. Brashares

P.S. I am enclosing a copy of the original letter, to be very open about everything that is involved. Yes, it is a big commitment. More important, it can make a BIG CONTRIBUTION to your Christian growth, and to the future of this Church!

## APPENDIX G

# Scottsdale United Methodist Church



4140 Miller Road, Scottsdale, Arizona 85251  
946-5301

August 27, 1975

Dear Members of Scottsdale United Methodist Church:

This letter will take only a few minutes to read... It might change your whole Christian life.

As most of you know, I recently returned from a training clinic in Madison, Wisconsin, where I studied firsthand the new adult Bible study program developed by the Adult Christian Education Foundation. Now we are ready to launch this program in our congregation!

Our first need is to find 10 men and 10 women who will be willing to undergo an intensive, disciplined teacher training program over the next two years. When these teachers have been trained, our entire congregation will then have the opportunity to take part in this new Bible study program.

THIS IS A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM which precedes the congregational use of the Bethel Series. What will be required of those who volunteer?

1. Each trainee must spend two and one-half hours a week in a study session with the pastor for the next two years. (9 months a year)
2. Each trainee will be required to do between 8 and 12 hours of homework a week between these weekly study sessions.
3. Each trainee will be required to learn about 15 Biblical concepts a week while classes are in session.
4. All members of the trainee class will be required to write examinations as the study program progresses.
5. When the training program is completed two years from this fall, each trainee will then be required to teach other adults in our congregation using the "Bethel Series" as the format for their studies.

The requirements, as you can see, are rigid and demanding. The road will be rough. It will take courage and dedication and the perseverance of a distance runner. But it will be worth all the effort. If you are brave enough to volunteer and are accepted for this teacher training program, you'll know more about the Bible at the end of the two-year training program than you've ever known before. You will have studied all sixty-six books of the Bible and will know the major emphasis of each book well.

Each of you, when you complete your training, will be well equipped to teach the Bible to other adult members of our congregation.

Perhaps you are being called to be one of these teachers... Think about it. If you are not afraid of a lot of hard work and a challenge which can prepare you for the important work of teaching the Scriptures, then why not come in and see me and I will give you more information about the program. Please do not volunteer unless you are ready and willing to give your whole heart, mind, and energy to this effort.

Then, it should be said that we cannot promise that everyone who volunteers will be accepted. We can enroll only 10 men and 10 women in this first phase and as such some who want very much to be a part of this exciting venture may have to be turned away.

Sincerely,

RICH LaSHURE

Rich LaShure  
Associate Pastor

## APPENDIX H



# Board of Discipleship

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
P. O. Box 840, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37202  
615 327-2700

May 9, 1975

The Reverend Mr. Richard H. Peterson  
14401 Dickens Street  
Sherman Oaks, California 91403

Dear Dick:

Some time ago, you wrote me concerning your positive experience with the Bethel Bible Series. I shared your letter with administrators in our Division of Education, asking them to put before me their evaluation of the Bethel Bible Series.

Please find enclosed a copy of "An Evaluation of the Bethel Bible Series" by Dr. George Koehler, Assistant General Secretary of the Section on Christian Education of Persons, Dr. Warren J. Hartman, Assistant General Secretary of the Section on Church School Development, and Dr. Horace Weaver, Executive Editor, Adult Publications. These gentlemen are highly respected Christian educators, and I feel they have been quite objective in their evaluation.

In light of this evaluation, which I support, it is impossible for us to recommend the Bethel Bible Series for use in our denomination. I trust you can understand and appreciate our position.

I look forward to seeing you at Annual Conference next month.

Sincerely,



Melvin G. Talbert  
General Secretary

MGT:ja

Enclosure

AN EVALUATION  
of  
THE BETHEL BIBLE SERIES

1. We affirm the congregational commitment. By official action the "congregation enrolls" in the program and invests substantial funds (\$750) in its support. Thus the program must be regarded as a major ministry of the congregation, not marginal and incidental as with many adult education programs.
2. We affirm the involvement of the professional staff. The pastor or director of Christian education plays a key role. He or she is trained and trains the volunteer leadership. Thus the professional staff person is helped to carry out his or her teaching responsibility with the people--and, of course, in the process becomes very supportive of the program. These are great assets for any educational program.
3. We affirm the high standards of teacher training. A two-year program can have tremendous value, and far surpasses our normal approaches. The success of the Bethel program in enlisting persons on this basis demonstrates the readiness of lay people to take discipleship and leadership seriously. They will respond to clear and worthwhile demands.
4. We affirm the commitment made by students. A forty-week course is a reasonable expectation. Again, the Bethel experience suggests a readiness for this level of commitment to learning.
5. We find mixed values in the concept of a self-contained program. On the one hand, many participants must find an appeal in the limited nature of this course and resource. One can "take" forty weeks of study and thereby "cover the ground." It is clear and definite, and therefore inviting and satisfying to the students. But on the other hand, this closed system does not appear to lead the student into still further exploration, the raising of new questions, the discovery of other resources and other points of view. To this extent it may encourage a false sense of pride in a little knowledge of some limited concepts rather than openness and motivation for still further learning.
6. We affirm the concept of long-range objectives. However, the Bethel Series fails to achieve its objective of being a "clear, systematic overview study of the Bible." The series offers a study of carefully chosen passages of scriptures--noteably from Genesis through II Kings and several passages from a few of the prophets. There is no attempt to understand the prophets as men of their age,

or as men who were understanding God's action in the historical events of their days. The New Testament studies approach proof texting. A major emphasis placed on the cognitive. Assignments for daily study include "memorization" of large numbers of selected passages of scripture for each session.

The statement that "all materials are designed to implement the interpretation of your pastor . . ." presupposes the Methodist principles of theological pluralism--which this study clearly does not possess. The study is based on forty pictures, rather than the scriptures. The pictures are allegorical in nature, and have built within them a certain "plan of salvation" which hardly gives freedom for various interpretations by a pastor or director of Christian education.

7. We affirm the concept of learning activities. The learning activities in the Bethel Bible series consist of some work to be done at home, between class sessions, and some to be done during class sessions. The homework usually consists of the following:

1. Review the previous lesson.
2. Read the suggested scripture passages (often lengthy, sometimes as much as four books).
3. Consider questions related to a number of scripture references.
4. Memorize concepts and an inordinate number of the biblical chapters in which each is found.
5. Study the symbolism of a picture and be prepared to stand before the class to interpret the symbolism.
6. Occasional very limited outside reading.

The activities of the class session usually consist of three major activities:

1. Stand before the class and describe and discuss the symbolism contained in the picture related to the study.
2. Discuss questions related to the scripture references.
3. Take several quizzes and tests.

The tests consist largely of identifying the biblical

chapters where certain concepts are to be found. There are occasional questions calling for an essay of 500 words or less.

One of the positive elements in the learning activities/procedures is that activities and instructions are very specific. There is something everyone can do, both at home and in the class. The review of the previous lesson helps to reinforce learning, and the tests provide a built-in accessibility. Since the Bible and the pictures constitute the basic tools, it is not necessary to have access to well stocked libraries.

One of the negative features of the learning activities is the emphasis on memorizing Bible chapters in which certain concepts are found. While an undue emphasis is placed on the biblical location of concepts, there is no assurance that efforts will be made to understand or comprehend the concepts themselves. The very limited amount of outside reading also tends to restrict the scope of learning and discourages other forms of investigative study.

8. We affirm the use of audio-visuals. The most serious criticism relates to the heavy dependence on 20 very graphic pictures related to themes in the Old Testament and 20 equally esoteric symbolic pictures related to New Testament themes. Presumably those themes cover every major theme of the Bible. The pictures have been drawn by a very keen and able artist and are in brilliant colors. Each of them contains a number of symbols which relate to the studies. In some respects, the pictures are reminiscent of some of the charts which have been made in the past to describe and interpret dispensational teachings. Although the series descriptions assert that there is no theological emphasis carried throughout the series, it is quite apparent that there are certain very basic theological concepts portrayed in the 40 pictures which tend toward a very simplistic and literalistic interpretation of the biblical concepts.

9. We affirm balance in the selection of biblical material. However, there is an obvious imbalance, especially in the study of the Old Testament, where twenty-two of the twenty-seven lessons are drawn from Genesis through Kings. It is unfortunate that the readers are not permitted a depth study of Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, II Isaiah, and others.

The 40 pictures and the selection of scriptural passages suggest that they were chosen to teach a specific "plan of salvation" in the mind of the writers of the Bethel Series. With this theological presupposition in mind, we can well understand the omission of many great passages

of biblical materials that ought to enrich the life of a Christian reader.

10. We find inaccuracies in a number of statements concerning biblical persons and events. We find a considerable use of eisegesis rather than exegesis. Lesson V, page 37, illustrates the point: the writer refers to "the art and dreams of a destiny," and refers to Israel as the one who had these dreams of destiny--and our writer put the setting in the days of Abraham. I am confident that the patriarchs did not dream of a destiny in the sense in which these writers claim to be the case. For one thing there was no sense of unity in "Israel" at the time of Abraham. Instead of referring to Israel as dreaming of a destiny, they might better have said Abraham and the Patriarchs--yet, even the idea of Abraham envisioning himself as engaged in the work which would ultimately have a possible effect upon all the families of the earth is reading history from the vantage point of 2000 years in the future. Abraham and the patriarchs certainly did not "dream of her tomorrows" in the way in which Lesson V suggests. The three-fold covenant (Genesis 12, 15, 17) was not specific enough in its details for the patriarchs to dream about their future in this way.

The heading "She Must Be a Separated People" is really not the issue in Genesis. Abraham did not leave Ur in order to be a separated people, and thus create the nation of Israel. Abraham went to Canaan in large part for theological reasons. The Sumerian civilization in Babylon in 2000 B.C. was a great culture--with great government buildings, three codes of law, excellent musical instruments, use of copper, and the development of religious literature (which included the story of creation, the fall of man, the flood stories, etc.). A feature which is not referred to by the Bethel Series, but is quite well known by the archaeologists is the sad state of religion in an otherwise highly civilized era. Abraham had to choose between state religion or personal experience, ritual (the acts of the worshiper) versus the life of the worshiper; sacrifice versus personal prayer.

To state that Israel's (in the days of Abraham) "destiny was too majestic to permit it to be placed in the hands of scriptural pygmies" is certainly a theological anachronism for the period of the patriarchs. This statement might have been said in the period of Moses some 600 years later. It is also inaccurate for the Bethel Series to teach that God deliberately chose Goshen to be the specific geographical location on which this small covenant community should live where they grew into a

great nation. As a matter of fact, the house of Joseph lived in Goshen because Joseph's people were nomads and needed the grass that was growing in the area called Goshen; and they were required to live in this area in the days of Rameses II inasmuch as this group of nomadic people acted as a buffer to invasions from various city-states/tribes from the north (Palestine). It is quite inaccurate to say "here (in Goshen) Israel could live separated from the pagan influences of the godless world." Joseph's family certainly intermingled with the pagan influences of 1700 B.C., and did so for the next 400 years, including the time of Rameses II. Furthermore to have claimed that there was a "covenant community" at the time that the house of Joseph lived in Goshen is inaccurate. The covenant community did not begin until Moses called the group together and led them out of Egypt to the land of Median, especially to Mt. Sinai. It was at Mt. Sinai that the slaves became a covenant community--receiving the gift of the ten commandments, and agreeing to worship the Lord as God. We call attention to the fact that the people were not yet Israel (which name and identity would take place when Joshua combined the Leah and Rachel tribes into a confederacy at the city of Shechem). Joseph, who married the daughter of the priest of On, had two sons born to his Egyptian wife Asenath--Ephriam and Manasseh.

11. Though we affirm a theologically pluralistic view yet we deny a fundamentalist approach to the scriptures.

Theologically the Bethel Series assumes an anthropomorphic view of God. It takes the events in the Garden of Eden literally--where everything is in total harmony. The series makes it clear that the readers are not to bother with scientific understandings, nor with the presuppositions of science, but think only of the message of the Bible--as though there were no revelation of God's word in nature. There is no suggestion for considering the creation of man (mankind--homo Erectus), and his development through the Stone Age, Copper and Iron Ages, etc. For students of the Bible to simply assume that we need not deal with the issues of anthropology, geology, astronomy, and other sciences is to encourage a conflict between science and faith in the minds of the student.

Lesson IV, page 34, states that "Israel (anachronistically referring to Abraham) was called by God to maintain ethnic separation . . ." This is eisegesis not exegesis. Within a few centuries after the times of the patriarchs Israel was called to be a nation of priests to all mankind. As priests, they were to instruct all mankind in the nature, will, and purposes of the Lord God. These instructions included the ten commandments, and prophetic

teaching to help persons of all nations to recognize those human choices which make for peace rather than war. To presuppose that God created Ethnic separation is contrary to the records in the book of Kings, namely: King David and Solomon married women from various tribes and nations that surrounded their land. They made no attempt whatsoever at ethnic separation. Even Moses had a Cushite (black) wife, as undoubtedly did King Solomon (The Song of Solomon). The theological claim that God called Israel into ethnic separation can not be claimed until the times of Nehemiah and Ezra--almost 1500 years after the time of Abraham. It was only in these difficult days (in the latter part of the fifth century B.C.) that Ezra and Nehemiah called for a racial purity as a means of obtaining religious purity.

12. We affirm use of other resources. The Bethel Series fails to take advantage of the hundreds of insights that are to be found in archaeology, anthropology, religious literature of antiquity, and other major resources which illuminate the biblical records. An illustration is found in lesson IV where it pictures Abraham dressed in the (apparently) white robes of an angel. This should be compared with the Beni-Hasan inscriptions in Egypt which so beautifully portray the way the Semites of this period dressed. There is nothing of archaeological insights into the great days of King David and King Solomon, nor the remarkable criticism which the great man of faith (Ahimaaz, who compiled Genesis 1-12) made as a method of challenging King Solomon and his court. There is nothing of the writings of great theologians such as Van Rad (Volumes I and II, Theology of the Old Testament) which enriches the study of the Bible. Additional resources make an exciting and helpful addition to Bible study.

George Koehler  
Warren Hartman  
Horace Weaver

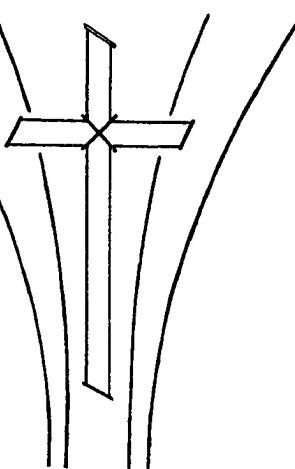
## APPENDIX I

**LA HABRA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

631 N. Euclid

La Habra, California

691-1797



September 6, 1974

Dear Members of the La Habra United Methodist Church:

I hope you will use the few minutes it will take to read this brief letter.... It might change your whole Christian life.

As most of you know we are launching the Congregational Phase of the Bethel Series Bible study program with over one hundred members enrolled in the first unit of study. What a tremendous spark this is going to give to our church. This means we cannot let down now!

**THEREFORE, THIS IS A CALL FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS FOR THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM. (The present Teacher-Trainees will finish their commitment following the present congregational study phase)**

In order to be prepared to continue our exciting Bethel Series Bible study program after 1976, we need to find 8 women and 8 men who will be willing to undergo an intensive, disciplined teacher training program over the next two years. When these teachers have been trained, the congregation will have the opportunity to continue to take part in this new Bible study program.

If you volunteer for the Teacher Training Program, here are some of the requirements:

1. Each trainee will spend two and one-half hours a week in a study session with the ministers for the next two years. (except holidays and vacations)
2. Each trainee will be required to do between 8 and 12 hours of homework a week between these weekly study sessions.
3. Each trainee will be required to learn about 15 BIBLICAL CONCEPTS a week while classes are in session.
4. All members of the trainee class will be required to write examinations as the study program progresses.
5. All members of the trainee class must be a member of the La Habra United Methodist Church.

Ministers • ROBERT M. BRASHARES • RICHARD E. NORTHUP • BETTY ZELLER

6. When the training program is completed two years from this fall, each trainee will then be required to teach other adults in our congregation using the "Bethel Series" as the format for their studies.

The requirements, as you can see, are rigid and demanding. The road will be rough. It will take courage and dedication and the perseverance of a distance runner. BUT LET ME TELL YOU, AFTER HAVING EXPERIENCED THIS LAST TEACHER TRAINING CLASS, IT WILL BE WORTH ALL THE EFFORT.

If you are brave enough to volunteer and are accepted for this teacher training program, you'll know more about the Bible at the end of the two-year training program than you've ever known before. You will have studied all sixty six books of the Bible and will know the major emphasis of each book well. Beyond a study of the Bible itself from Genesis through Revelation, you will be trained in teacher methods, laws of communications, the fundamentals of speech and some laws of learning.

EACH OF YOU, WHEN YOU COMPLETE YOUR TRAINING, WILL BE WELL EQUIPPED TO TEACH THE BIBLE TO OTHER ADULT MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION.

Perhaps God is calling you now to be one of these teachers.... Think about it. Pray about it. If you are not afraid of a lot of hard work and a challenge which can prepare you for the important work of teaching the Scriptures, then why not come in and see me and I will give you more information about the program. Please do not volunteer unless you are ready and willing to give your whole heart, mind and energy to this effort. IMPORTANT - YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE PAST BIBLICAL EXPERIENCE: Just a willingness to give it your all.

Let me say further that we cannot promise that everyone who volunteers will be accepted. We can enroll only 8 men and 8 women in this next Teacher Training Class, and as such some who may want very much to be a part of this exciting venture may have to be turned away.

Sincerely,

*Richard E. Northup*  
Richard E. Northup  
Minister of Christian Education

## APPENDIX J

An Adult Education Program"THE BETHEL SERIES"

1. What is it? It is an exciting, successful, church-wide program of Bible Study.

Here is what it includes, step by step:

- (1) Our decision to enroll in the Bethel Series. This involves:
  - A. The decision to put Bible Study at the center of the life of our congregation..
  - B. The decision to back this up, with time from our leadership for training in this program, and with \$1,300 of our money for this training and for two year's worth of teacher training materials.
- (2) Ministerial Training, for Rich LaShure. June 1-13, 1975.
- (3) Recruitment of Teacher Trainees. September-December, 1975.
- (4) Teacher Training. January 1976 through June 1977.
- (5) Massive Congregational Phase: 210 start Bible Study. October, 1977.
- (6) Additional Classes Begin. January 1978, Easter, and October. (Exhibit A.).
- (7) First classes complete Old & New Testament. June, 1979.

2. Why do it?

- (1) The Bible is the book of Christianity.
- (2) Our people have been asking for Bible Study Classes.
- (3) People often tell us they need help with the Bible BEFORE they can teach.
- (4) People who have been in the Bethel Series say their lives have been changed and blessed by it. (Exhibit B.)

3. What happens when, after 4 years, the Bethel BIBLE STUDY Series ends?

- (1) A strong adult education night (and adult education "habit") has been created in the life of the congregation.
- (2) A variety of other adult classes pick up where the Bethel Series leaves off, and continue the strong church-wide program of adult education.

4. Questions?

(Exhibit C, The Bethel Series booklet).

5. Next Steps:

1. Education Commission recommendation to the Administrative Board, that our church enroll in the Bethel Series.
2. Administrative Board vote to enroll, at their meeting March 31st.

Comments of Bethel Bible Series Teacher Trainees

**Clyde Cameron** - "The series is an instrument by which I have gained great insights into the Bible. I have captured an overall view of the Old and New Testaments. It helped me gain a new understanding of the life of Christ, and how He can improve our life."

**Peggy Cameron** - "I had done just a hit and miss reading of the Bible and found the discipline of reading it from 'cover to cover' most stimulating, thought provoking, and enriching. And the greatest reward was the deep sense of fellowship and caring which was built up over the two year period among those in the class."

**Ginny Fleming** - "Through our study of the Holy Scriptures I found teachings to believe, examples to follow, duties to perform, promises to claim, prayers to echo, and most of all God's love expressed to us in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I'm grateful God called me to be a part of this program, and I am looking forward to sharing our living God with others."

**Barbara Tucker** - "The Bethel Series, along with the close fellowship of our group, combined to open up for me a new world of understanding about God's 'working plan' throughout human history, and the meaning, responsibility and powerful potential that is ours as Christians living in today's world."

**APPENDIX K**

LA HABRA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
631 North Euclid Street . La Habra, California

**BETHEL BIBLE SERIES**

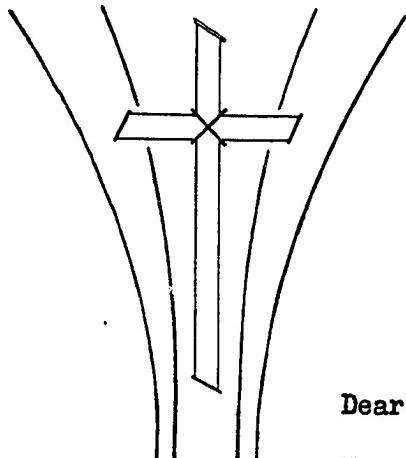
I (we) wish to be contacted by a teacher for  
enrollment in the Bethel Series.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX L

**LA HABRA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

631 N. Euclid

La Habra, California

691-1797

April 15, 1974

Dear Christian Friend:

You are aware of the fact that the La Habra United Methodist Church is one of 295 congregations in the nation which will introduce the Bethel Series Bible Study Program on a congregational wide level this fall.

The first unit of study for the congregation at large will begin on Wednesday evening, October 16, 1974, 7:30 p.m.

Official Enrollment begins this next Sunday, April 21. May I Personally encourage you to pre-enroll now in this unusual Bible study program. The enclosed information will help answer many of your questions about the program.

You say, "Why Study the Bible?" That's a good question. I want to share my reasons, and then you may have your own.

First, you are a Christian. Basic knowledge of the biblical narratives produces a committed group of people within the church.

Second, Bible study helps people identify God's presence and action in our lives and in the lives of others.

Third, to share in the stories of human experiences of the past, where God has been present and active, can help us to know more fully what it means for us to live in the Kingdom of God.

Besides all this, there is just something great about people getting together once a week for a short period of time, to learn of God's word and develop some friendships.

I believe there will be greater participation in our church, more enthusiasm and better church attendance because of a basic Bible study together.

Return the enclosed contact card today, or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday.

Sincerely,

*Richard E. Northup*

Ministers • ROBERT M. BRASHARES • RICHARD E. NORTHUP • BETTY ZELLER

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

**1. QUESTION:** How many congregations will be participating in this program this fall?

**ANSWER:** Our church is one of 295 congregations being introduced to this series this Fall. The Bethel Series has been in existence for 14 years.

**2. QUESTION:** Will the Bethel Bible study classes be conducted every Wednesday night of the year once this program begins in our congregation?

**ANSWER:** NO! The program schedule calls for only three seven-week units a year. This means that when you pre-enroll for attendance in classes, you enroll for only one seven-week unit at a time. Here is this time schedule as it has been set up.

Unit 1 Wed. nights... Oct. 16 through Nov. 27 - 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
Unit 2 Wed. nights... Jan. 8 through Feb. 19 - 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
Unit 3 Wed. nights... Apr. 6 through May 18 - 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

**3. QUESTION:** Will there be child Care?

**ANSWER:** Yes. Child care will be provided for small children if you make this known to one of the Teacher-Trainees.

**4. QUESTION:** Is it true that no other events will be scheduled on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. once the new Bethel Bible Study Program begins on a congregational-wide level?

**ANSWER:** Yes. Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. will soon become Bible Study night in our congregation. All organizational meetings, choir rehearsals, committee meetings, etc. will be scheduled on other nights of the week to allow everyone to take advantage of this new program.

**5. QUESTION:** My husband is a little hesitant about enrolling in the Bethel Series studies. He wonders if there will be any other men enrolled or whether this will be primarily a woman's program?

**ANSWER:** Put your husband at ease on the point. Unless we have completely miscalculated the interest which is being expressed in these studies by both men and women, we are convinced that this is one Bible study program which will have as many men enrolled as women.

**6. QUESTION:** Will there be any enrollment fees for these classes?

**ANSWER:** Yes. For each seven-week unit of study there will be an enrollment fee of \$3.00 per person. When man and wife enroll together and use only one textbook, they pay a total of \$3.50 per seven-week unit. These enrollment fees help to pay for the textbook which you will receive as you pursue this study.

**7. QUESTION:** If I enroll in the Bethel Series Study Program study classes, will I be required to write examinations?

**ANSWER:** No. not unless you choose to do so.

**3. QUESTION:** Well, how can that be? I have heard that the teacher trainees who are using this format have been required to write any exams.

**ANSWER:** That is true! But the congregational phase of the Bethel Series is much different than the teacher trainee phase. Those people who have been training for the last 15 months had to submit themselves to intensive study disciplines because they were and are being trained to be teachers. Their task has been to thoroughly familiarize themselves with concepts and content of the Scriptures. As such, the writing of exams has been helpful and useful to them in accomplishing that purpose.

**9. QUESTION:** How about homework and outside reading assignments? What are the requirements in those areas?

**ANSWER:** If you are to gain anything from the classes, you must do some work outside of the class sessions themselves. As such, some reading assignments will be provided for you as you progress from study to study. Reading assignments will be provided which will permit as much outside study as your time allows.

**10. QUESTION:** When can I be OFFICALLY ENROLLED in the forthcoming Bethel Series Bible study classes?

**ANSWER:** Official Enrollment begins Sunday, April 21. At that time the teacher-trainees will be provided with the enrollment cards, and if you have contacted them about your interest in these studies, they will call on you sometime soon after April 21 and will give you the opportunity to sign an enrollment card.

If you have not indicated your interest and would like to pre-enroll in these studies, return the enclosed contact card to the church office at your earliest convenience.

**11. QUESTION:** If I wanted to contact one of the Teacher-Trainees for more information on enrollment procedures and the studies, whom would I contact.

**ANSWER:** Teachers for the Bethel Bible Series are:

Pumpkin Bantrell	871-8128	Marge Townsend	697-0045
Carolyn Rhoades	694-4479	Sam Deese	691-7008
Peggy Cameron	697-8444	Ginny Fleming	697-4661
Shirley Cook	943-2487	Barbara Tucker	947-1662
Clyde Cameron	697-8444	Frank Peterson	697-0817
Archie Shaw	691-5157	Betty Shaw	691-5157

**12. QUESTION:** Will there be limited enrollment for the Bethel Bible Series classes?

**ANSWER:** Yes. We encourage you to pre-enroll for the Bethel Bible study classes at your earliest convenience as the enrollment will be closed when 120 of our members are registered.

## APPENDIX M

Inserts in Sunday bulletin followed by pastoral interviews.

+First interview during first week in October.

DELAY DECISION: DELAY DECISIONS!

Give them time to realize what's involved.  
Think about 1, 2, 3-80!

+Second interview during third or fourth week in November.

A SUMMARY OF THE TEACHER SELECTION PROCEDURE

1. Establish teacher quota while here in Madison.
2. Begin NOW evaluating congregational members in relationship to teacher attributes.
3. Publish congregational letter on or about September 1.
4. Run Sunday bulletin inserts for four weeks in September.
5. At the end of September set up a personal interview with each person on your list.
6. Delay decisions.
7. During either the third or fourth week in November, recall all people interviewed for second interview.
8. Announce the names of the teacher-trainees to the congregation some time during the month of December.
9. Set aside about five minutes in a Sunday morning worship service for Consecration of the Teacher-Trainees. This should be done just before the teachers begin their two-year training program.

## APPENDIX N

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN CHOOSING YOUR TEACHER TRAINEES

1. Commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ
2. The person who will communicate to both intellect and emotions...mind and heart
3. The stable extrovert
4. The person with spark and enthusiasm
5. The person who is sensitive to what is going on around him...the observant person
6. The person who demonstrates a love for and an interest in people
7. The person with a healthy sense of humor
8. The person who demonstrates flexibility of mind
9. The person who demonstrates an ordered mind
10. The person with an optimistic outlook
11. The person who has proven himself or herself to be perseverant and thorough in the little tasks

NOTE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STARTERS AND FINISHERS!

12. The person who can give some assurance of permanency in the community
13. The person who speaks from the diaphragm
14. The person with an alterable work load who is in a position to change his or her schedule to permit adequate time for preparation and study
15. Age span...25-60

It is not necessary to disrupt established leadership in your congregation. Look for those who may never have had the opportunity to be leaders and develop them.

## APPENDIX O

THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS TO TRAIN

Determined by the size of your communicant membership  
by the fall of 1975

<u>Classification Number</u>	<u>Size of Communicant Membership</u>	<u>Teachers</u>
1	. . . . . Below 200	. . . . . 10
2	. . . . . 200 to 400	. . . . . 10
3	. . . . . 400 to 700	. . . . . 10
4	. . . . . 700 to 900	. . . . . 12
5	. . . . . 900 to 1250	. . . . . 14
6	. . . . . 1250 to 1500	. . . . . 16
7	. . . . . 1500 to 1750	. . . . . 18
8	. . . . . 1750 to 2000	. . . . . 20
9	. . . . . 2000 to 2250	. . . . . 21
10	. . . . . 2250 to 2500	. . . . . 22
11	. . . . . 2500 to 2750	. . . . . 23
12	. . . . . 2750 to 3000	. . . . . 24
13	. . . . . 3000 to 3250	. . . . . 25
14	. . . . . 3250 to 3500	. . . . . 26
15	. . . . . 3500 to 3750	. . . . . 27
16	. . . . . 3750 to 4000	. . . . . 28
17	. . . . . 4000 to 4250	. . . . . 29
18	. . . . . 4250 to 5000	. . . . . 30
19	. . . . . 5000 and Over	. . . . . 32

- + Teacher-loss factor figured into the suggested number of teachers to train.
- + Teacher-trainee class should be made up of equal number of men and women.

Example:

Classification 12 . . . . . 24 teachers

12 Men  
12 Women

## APPENDIX P

1. At the end of September, set up first personal interview with each person on your teacher prospect list.
2. DELAY DECISIONS. Give them time to realize what's involved.
3. During either the third or fourth week in November, recall all people you have interviewed, for second interview.
4. Announce the names of the teacher-trainees to the congregation some time during the month of December.

## APPENDIX Q

DEDICATION OF BETHEL BIBLE SERIES TEACHER-TRAIINEES  
January 4, 1976 - 9:30 A M

## PRESENTATION OF BETHEL BIBLE SERIES TEACHER-TRAIINEES

MINISTER: OUR PURPOSE in the Bethel Bible Series is to help church members gain a fuller understanding of the Bible, experience Christian community, and grow in response to God's will.

We recognize these persons, who have responded to God's call to enter this program.

Let your response be known to all.

TRAIINEES: WE HAVE ACCEPTED THE CHALLENGE to become Teacher-Trainees in the Bethel Bible Series. We enter God's service as we study His Word, and prepare to teach the Bible to others.

MINISTER: THE REQUIREMENTS of this program are demanding. It will take the courage and perseverance of a long distance runner. But, it will be worth all the effort. Do you realize what is involved?

TRAIINEES: We have given it much thought. As we respond to God's call and the challenge to be a Teacher-Trainee, we rely upon His help.

WE DEDICATE ourselves to attend class and to study faithfully. We will do this not only for our own benefit, but to prepare ourselves to help this entire congregation study the Bible, so that every member may receive God's guidance and help.

## CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

WE ARE GRATEFUL to you for your dedication, and we pledge you our prayers and support. We give thanks that God is always calling persons to speak, teach, and serve in His name. May He bless and use us all.

MINISTER: Prayer of Dedication. Teacher-Trainees kneeling at the altar.

# The Bethel Series

**ORDER MATERIALS FROM**

**STRAUS PUBLISHING COMPANY**  
 1028 E. WASHINGTON AVE. • P.O. BOX 2118  
 MADISON, WISCONSIN 53701

<b>INVOICE TO:</b>	Pastor.....
	Church.....
	Street.....
	City..... State..... Zip.....

If You Have to Order By Phone  
 OUR NUMBER IS  
**(608) 251-3222**  
 ORDER DESK HOURS  
 MONDAY THRU FRIDAY  
 8 to 12 and 1 to 4  
 CENTRAL TIME ZONE

<b>SHIP TO: IF NOT SAME AS ABOVE</b>	Name.....
	Church.....
	Street.....
	City..... State..... Zip.....

<b>ORDERED BY</b>      
<b>PURCHASE ORDER NO.</b>      

<b>DATE NEEDED</b>      
<b>PLEASE ALLOW THREE WEEKS</b>      

Code	Quantity	ITEM	BETHEL SERIES	Unit Pr.	Amount
50		EXTRA BINDER-BLUE		1.95	
51		EXTRA BINDER-BROWN (Not Avail. Dec. & Jan.)		1.95	
<b>*ORDER IN MULTIPLES OF 10 ONLY</b>					
10 for 10 students; 20 for 20 students; 50 for 50 students					
01	*	UNIT A (O.T. 1-6) with binder	(Per student)	3.25	
02	*	UNIT B (O.T. 7-13)	(Per student)	1.90	
03	*	UNIT C (O.T. 14-20)	(Per student)	1.90	
04	*	UNIT D (N.T. 1-8)	(Per student)	1.90	
05	*	UNIT E (N.T. 9-14)	(Per student)	1.90	
06	*	UNIT F (N.T. 15-20)	(Per student)	1.90	
07		COMPLETE SETS-TEACHERS	B-L-T & A	12.75	
53		SETS OF 40 LARGE PAINTINGS-Plastic case		105.00	
54		SETS OF 40 LARGE PAINTINGS-Cardboard fldr.		60.00	
55		Extra TEACHER TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS, O.T.		.75	
56		Extra TEACHER TRAINING ASSIGNMENTS, N.T.		.75	
57		Extra CONGREGATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS, O.T.		.75	
58		Extra CONGREGATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS, N.T.		.75	
59		PICTORIAL INDEX		.20	
78		OUR HEBREW-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE, John Milton		3.50	
80		GOD'S COVENANT OF BLESSING, John Milton		3.50	
82		DIVINE IMPERATIVES, Morris Wee		3.50	
41		No. 641 BULLETIN COVER		.04	
42		No. 642 BULLETIN COVER		.04	
43		No. 643 BULLETIN COVER		.04	
44		No. 644 BULLETIN COVER		.04	
60		TIME FOR DECISION ENVELOPES (minimum 100)		.05	
		REPLACEMENT PAINTINGS			
65		No. Title		7.50	

<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shipping Date.....					
UPS Reg (circle)	UPS Blue	Bus	Tk	Post Collect	Prepaid
B/L No._____ Firm_____					
Prepaid Postage If Any_____					
Picked by_____					
Checked and packed by_____					

ORDERS over 60# Shipped By Truck (Freight Charges Collect)

MAY 1, 1975

## APPENDIX S

TIME SCHEDULE FOR TEACHER-TRAINEE PHASE

Convene first week in January, 1974

1. Conduct weekly sessions from January through June 15. (Strongly recommended that lectures not be interrupted during period of Lent first year)
2. Summer recess from June 15 through September 1.
  - A. Give students reading assignment during summer months. Suggestion: John Bright's Kingdom of God OR John Milton's God's Covenant of Blessing. Have each student turn in a written report on his summer reading.
3. Upon reconvening of classes in September of 1974, spend a few weeks in review so that students are brought up-to-date on material covered.
4. Run sessions from September until about the first week in December, 1974.
5. Christmas recess.
6. Reconvene classes in January and run through until June 15.
7. Summer recess.
8. Reconvene classes in September of 1975 and run until end of October, 1975.
9. CONGREGATIONAL PHASE BEGINS IN NOVEMBER OF 1975.

## APPENDIX T

A DESCRIPTION OF THE BETHEL SERIES  
AND A STATEMENT OF ITS OBJECTIVES

The Bethel Series is a tool or an instrument which is designed to aid church members in gaining a deeper understanding of the Biblical message.

In method or approach its primary objective is to aid the Biblical student in securing a knowledgeable overview of the Scriptures so that he will be provided with a base or a springboard from which to pursue a depth study of God's Word.

Neither a survey course nor a depth study, The Bethel Series simply attempts to acquaint the student with the basic fundamentals of both Old and New Testament narratives. It seeks to present these motifs in the clearest, most systematic manner possible so that the student, as he progresses in his study, begins to see the inter-relationship of events and ideas within the Scriptures, and hence gains an appreciation for the part as it relates to the whole and the whole as it relates to the part.

Along with its attempt to provide an overview of the Biblical message, the Series also seeks to give the student an appreciation for interpretive principles which must be honored if the Bible is to convey a relevant message:

- It is designed to familiarize the student with the various literary media which the Biblical writers used to convey their message lest the student by an insistence upon wooden literalism force the Bible to say things which it does not say.
- It gives substantial attention to defining the radical difference between Hebrew-thought-form and Western-thought-form lest the student impose Greek questions upon the Bible and expect answers from the Scriptures which it is neither designed for nor prepared to give.
- It accents the necessity of seeing the various parts of the Biblical message in their direct relationship to the historical context in which that message was given.
- It seeks to let Scripture interpret Scripture in those segments where there seems, at first sight,

to be conflict in concept and it demands that the part never be interpreted in isolation but always in its relationship to the whole of God's revelation in history.

To gain its primary objective in giving aid toward a deeper understanding of the Biblical message, the course presupposes and demands academic disciplines on the part of its participants. In both teacher-trainee and congregational phases, reading assignments precede each segment of study and little is promised to those who put nothing into the course. Learning is more than listening. It is involvement in the material at hand, and where the tool becomes an end in itself instead of a means to an end, the designers of the course expect little or nothing in the way of a broader understanding. But where students apply themselves to a disciplined study of the Bible both inside and outside of the classroom, there is discovery and enlightenment and changed lives.

As to language, The Bethel Series deliberately attempts to avoid theological jargon that belongs in the pastor's study or to learned seminars. This is a course designed for laymen, taught by laymen, and geared to speak to laymen, and it does not presuppose a strong theological background or understanding on the part of the learner.

As to method of presentation, the study at this juncture leans toward the lecture method but does not discourage discussion. Some of the classes are half lecture, half discussion; some three-quarters lecture and one-quarter discussion; some primarily lecture. But in all cases the teachers are encouraged to make judgments upon the understanding and comprehension levels of their students and to permit or encourage discussion only when they feel that such discussion will be meaningful and relevant to the majority of the members of the class. In this early stage of The Bethel Series Program, it is not known when the discussion method will become the primary class procedure, but we move toward that objective and plan broad discussion sessions when we feel that it will be the most effective and most beneficial for the greatest number of any fellowship.

To aid in the retention of what the student has learned in the study of the Bible itself, the Bethel Series program makes use of a series of forty paintings. It is to be understood that these paintings are not to be classified or labeled as "art pieces." They were neither designed nor intended to be so: They are illustrations or posters which serve to summarize a body of

knowledge and which carry specific meanings that have been imposed upon them. They have no meaning apart from the purpose which they fulfill in the classrooms where they are used. Merely tools to help the student remember and retain what he has learned, they become secondary to the primary objective, which is to acquaint church members with the message of the Scriptures, and they fall further and further into the background as the study progresses.

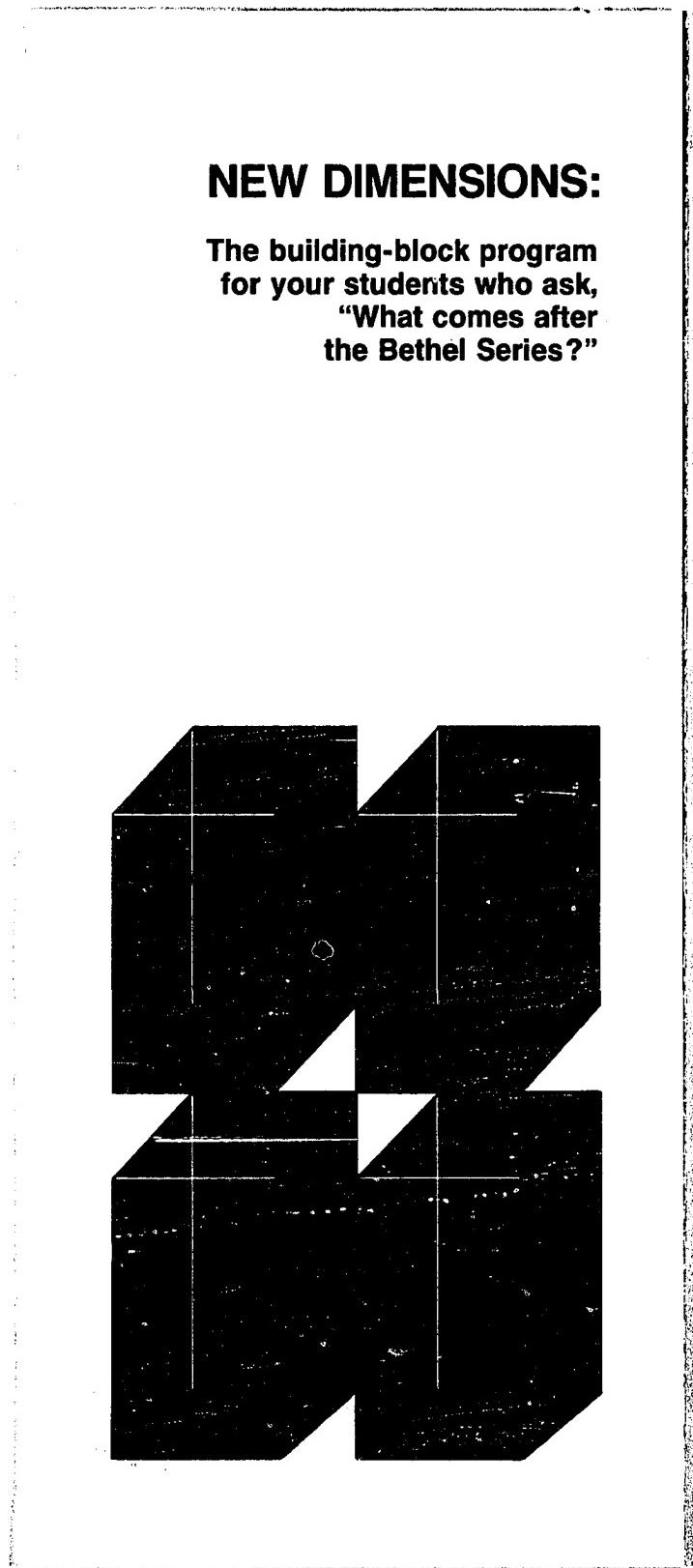
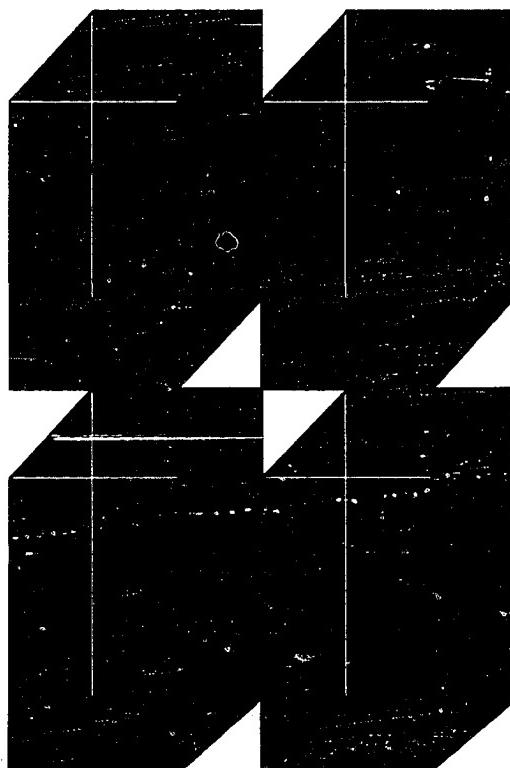
Before The Bethel Series can be used in a congregation, its pastor, education director, or other designated staff member, must attend a two-week training session in Madison, Wisconsin. The purpose of these training sessions is to permit the designers of The Bethel Series to give clear, precise explanation as to what the Series is and what it is not. Here, among other things, the staff member learns that the written format which is distributed to the teacher-trainees and to the congregational members pursuing the study is again only a tool or an instrument fashioned to aid the student in his way through the Scriptures. These printed lectures must not, in any sense of the word, be thought of as being, or intending to be, exhaustive in scope. Their purpose is not definitive, but directive, and consequently must be seen only as bases or springboards from which the student can launch into a deeper and more comprehensive study of the Scriptures. To aid the students toward that end, the authors provide to the staff members attending these clinic workshops a broad bibliography which will supply supplementary material on each of the forty segments in The Bethel Series.

In conclusion the developers of The Bethel Series are fully aware that this initial attempt to provide an educational aid has imperfections. Like any and all experimental efforts, it stands in need of correction and improvement. As its content is exposed to the minds of hundreds of involved persons around the nation, we confidently expect to gain the insights of others who are using this Series. As those insights are transferred to us, we shall make the improvements that will help to make the Series an ever more useful instrument to bring people into a study of the Word of God. We are grateful for the response given to the program by congregations around the nation, and we are happy in the knowledge that we have had a part in the development of a program which will help to confront people with the Lord Jesus Christ and in that confrontation make them better servants in His Kingdom.

## APPENDIX U

**NEW DIMENSIONS:**

**The building-block program  
for your students who ask,  
“What comes after  
the Bethel Series?”**



**Over 800 churches have used  
New Dimensions to build  
upon the Scriptural foundation  
developed by the Bethel Series.**

\*The Bethel Series was not intended as an end in itself. It has helped you create a base of knowledgeable Bible students. Now you can build upon that foundation, with **New Dimensions**, a program that extends the experience of the Bethel Series, and applies it to everyday life.

#### **Continuity**

New Dimensions is designed to provide your students with the same challenge they found in the Bethel Series. It keeps them learning and involved. It increases the effectiveness of your small group discussions on modern living by drawing upon the common Scriptural knowledge gained through the Bethel Series.

#### **Content**

This three part program contains special adult interest areas: \*Marriage, The Ten Commandments, and Human Relationships.

#### **Commitment**

The insight your people acquire through New Dimensions will strengthen their lives and convictions. Your church will continue to benefit from their participation and leadership - and you can continue to equip the saints as New Dimensions strengthens your members to serve on your Board of Elders, your Sunday School teaching staff, your church committees of all descriptions.





## **The Program**

The New Dimensions curriculum covers five 7-week sessions over a two-year span. As new classes finish the Bethel Series, they can easily move into the New Dimensions program.

## **The Pastor's Personal Involvement is Limited**

You can train your Bethel Series teachers to lead the program with three or four weeks of orientation, or through a weekend retreat. You'll find that your teachers eagerly look forward to presenting the new material.

## **The Clinic June 29—July 4, 1975**

New Dimensions begins with a 5-day Orientation Clinic in Madison. Here you have a chance to study and interact with other Bethel Series pastors and congregational leaders from all parts of the country. You learn what New Dimensions is all about. And you bring back the kind of ideas and enthusiasm that helps you get the program off to a good start.

We urge you to bring your spouse to the clinic. Time and again ministers tell us that one of the most rewarding aspects of the clinic is the opportunity to share the sessions and discussions with their husbands or wives.

## The Courses

**1**

### To Love and To Cherish

This course, taught by the pastor, examines the contemporary problems of marriage in two 7-week sessions. Your students consider marriages of all types—good, bad, and merely tolerable.

Subjects include:

- The status of marriage on the American scene.*
- The Biblical understanding of marriage.*
- Dealing with adjustment.*
- Communication between partners.*
- Protecting the individuality of a mate.*
- The sexual side of marriage.*

**2**

### The Ten Commandments

Taught by laymen in two 7-week sessions, this course is a thorough study of the Ten Commandments as they apply to today's complex social patterns for adults. The study includes:

- Introduction to the Law.*
- Commandments I, II and III—Divine imperatives on man's relationship to God.*
- Commandments IV through X—Divine imperatives on man's relationship to his fellow man.*

**3**

### Gems for Daily Living

This course, taught by laymen in one 7-week session, explores in depth the relevancy of the Scriptures to man and his daily life. The course is based upon the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, and includes topics like:

- Love of self.*
- Tolerating the imperfections and weaknesses in others.*
- Respect for individuality.*
- Creating the desire and will for good relationships.*
- Forming and maintaining a vital relationship with God.*

## Answer Your Students' Need for Continuing Involvement

Consider what New Dimensions can do for your Bethel Series students. It is the building-block program that expands the Scriptural foundation of the Bethel Series. It continues the spiritual growth of your people. We urge you to discuss New Dimensions with your congregation now.

We are forwarding this information to you at an early date so that you can include New Dimensions in your budget planning. Enrollments are limited, and reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. The enclosed reply card can get your congregation started by reserving a seat for you at the next New Dimensions Clinic, June 29—July 4, 1975.

The enrollment fee is \$450. Room and board is \$106.40. Special reduced rate for spouses is \$91.50. Children under 12, \$71.50. There is no charge for children under 2, and free child care is provided during sessions.

New Dimensions—Since 1965, over 800 churches have found it the logical answer to the question, "What comes after the Bethel Series?" It can be your answer, too. Register your congregation today.

## APPENDIX V

March 1974

Dear Pastor,

Do you remember how you felt before you gave your first sermon?

Well, that's how your Bethel Series teachers feel...before they teach their first classes.

We have already given you the facts about Teachers' Workshops. This letter might be considered a last minute reminder.

There is still time to plan for your teachers to attend a Workshop with us in Madison. So sign them up now.

A national workshop is the finishing touch for teaching. And we know from experience that it is often one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences of your teachers' lives.

This is a critical time for your program, because its success depends to a great degree upon your teachers. A Workshop can really help them to communicate most effectively in class situations.

So do it now. Send in the forms and join us with teachers from all over the country this summer in Madison.

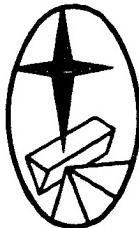
With you in Christ's work,

THE BETHEL SERIES



L. H. Hueschen, Director

Enclosures



**the Bethel series**

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION, 313 PRICE PLACE, BOX 5305, MADISON, WIS. 53705, PHONE (608) 238-0296

SCHEDULE

## SUNDAY EVENING...

Opening Banquet: Teachers and Bethel Series staff members get acquainted and exchange ideas.

## MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY...

Classes on Laws of Communication: To help you polish the skills needed for effective two-way communication.

Classes on Hermeneutics: Each morning you review and refresh your understanding of these important interpretive principles.

Teacher's Attitudes: You'll learn the importance of what you say and how you say it...some of the ways to develop effective communication through positive attitudes.

Practice Teaching: Each day, experienced Bethel Series lay teachers conduct a class for an hour. Lessons 1, 2 and 3 from the Old Testament are used. Join the staff in a discussion and evaluation of each performance.

Discussion Hour: Staff and teachers dig into the dozens of Biblical and practical questions which will come up during your own congregational classes.

## TUESDAY EVENING...

Film on the Laws of Communication: With film discussion following.

National Concepts Competition: Voluntary written test on Concepts.

(All Biblical concepts of the Bethel Series Old Testament lessons, and the New Testament lessons through Study 14 except, for the Gospel of John.)

THURSDAY EVENING...Closing Banquet.FRIDAY NOON...Workshop Conclusion.PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

Enrollment fee is \$24.30 per person. Room and board is \$98.00. Special reduced rate for spouses is \$83.10. Children under 12 are \$63.10. There is no charge for children under 2; and child care during sessions is provided without charge. Includes all meals Sunday evening through Friday and lodging from Sunday evening through Friday evening. Be sure to bring along your Bethel Series lesson book and your Bible.

In the past, many churches have used the months before the Workshops to plan and stage fund-raising events. This not only helps those attending the Workshops, but serves to create a greater spirit of togetherness within the congregation.

Decide now that all will go. You'll find a way to do it. A Teachers' Workshop may become for you what it has for so many others, "the frosting on the cake" to your training as a Bethel Series teacher. Send in your registration form...and look forward to your teaching experience with a whole new feeling of confidence and enthusiasm.

TEACHERS' WORKSHOP. IT CAN WORK FOR YOU!

#####

PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL TEACHERS READ THIS INFORMATION.

Route to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: \_\_\_\_\_

"OUR GROUP OF 7 OUT OF 9 TEACHERS HESITANTLY CAME TO MADISON,  
 ALL TERRIFIED BY THE PROSPECT OF TEACHING. WE LEFT WITH THE  
REALIZATION THAT WE CAN DO IT!"

-- Note from members of a church  
 in Sturgis, S. D.

If you are like every other new Bethel Series teacher, you're wondering just how good a teacher you will be the first time you face your class.

We know how you feel. That's why we started national Teachers' Workshops 12 years ago.....

- To give you confidence.
- To help you look forward with enthusiasm to that day when you walk into your Bethel Series classroom for the first time as a teacher.
- To give you special help in communicating.
- To help you "put it all together" -- everything you've learned during teacher training.

THE 12TH ANNUAL  
BETHEL SERIES  
TEACHERS' WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP 1 -- AUGUST 4 - 9, 1974

WORKSHOP 2 -- AUGUST 11 - 16, 1974

MADISON, WISCONSIN. Both Workshops are identical in format and content.

A Teachers' Workshop is a unique experience available to teacher trainees, pastors, educational directors, and their wives, husbands and children. Lowell Hall, overlooking Lake Mendota, will be the setting for the lectures, classes and work sessions that will give the finishing touch to your teacher training. Housing is adjacent to Lowell Hall, on the Lake.

Each feature of a Teachers' Workshop will help give you the extra confidence and enthusiasm you need to lead your own congregational classes.

(Continued)

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY COMMENTS  
WE'VE RECEIVED FROM WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS:

"A mountaintop experience. As your spokesman pointed out, 'We try to give you more than you expected.' In this you have most admirably succeeded. The setting is magnificently inspirational. The challenge presented by the teaching experience was meaningful and exciting."

Nancy Leinius

"There is a chance for terrific involvement and a real challenge to learn with a group of people who are all in the same boat. And this really builds a kind of togetherness and unity that is hard to explain. But it works. To put it simply, the Workshop is a kind of 'battery recharge' for teachers. An atmosphere and time for gaining confidence and first-hand knowledge from people who have had tremendous experience in teaching. Before these people teach their first classes, they must have the confidence that they can do the job. The Workshop really helps to boost their confidence tremendously."

Pastor Phil Paulson

"Vacations are precious to us -- we guard them like gold and rubies. So it was with some doubts that we elected to spend a week at the Teachers' Workshop. We left Madison completely refreshed, and much more inspired and enthused, with friendships we pray will last through the years!"

Phil and Margaret Jordan

"I was almost afraid to come and spend time and money on the Bethel Series Teachers' Workshop for fear it wouldn't be all that I had anticipated. But it turned out to be much more than I had hoped!"

Mrs. Daniel Andov

"I not only would recommend the Clinic for fledgling Bethel Series teachers, but would also consider it vital. It's the 'frosting on the cake.' We were given insights into material not otherwise possible -- a wealth of practical knowledge necessary for sensitive teaching and, above all, confidence."

Mrs. Florence Beall

"It seems impossible that I could have arrived last Monday struggling with excuses for not feeling ready to teach, and now getting ready to leave feeling that I can hardly wait to start teaching."

Marilyn Qually

"The Workshop improved confidence, dedication, and enthusiasm. Very stimulating. Wonderful opportunity to chat with others about their church's approach to Bethel. Their success greatly encouraged me."

Tom Galbert

"The Workshop was the extra that really tied it all together and brought out new insights. I am already looking at my prospective pupils (and my family and friends) in a new light. Thank you."

Mrs. Dale Liljestrand

**THE BETHEL SERIES**  
**12th ANNUAL**  
**NATIONAL TEACHERS' WORKSHOPS**  
**MADISON, WIS.**

Workshop 1.....August 4 - 9, 1974  
 Workshop 2.....August 11 - 16, 1974  
 Both identical in format and content.

Enrollment fee is \$24.30 per person. Room and board is \$98.00. Special reduced rate for spouses is \$83.10. Children under 12 are \$63.10. There is no charge for children under 2; and child care during sessions is provided without charge.

**REGISTRATION FORM**

Fill out and mail to:

The Adult Christian Education Foundation  
 313 Price Place, Box 5305  
 Madison, Wis. 53705

PLEASE ENROLL THE FOLLOWING IN  
 A TEACHERS' WORKSHOP:

Name _____	Address _____	City _____	State _____	Zip _____
Church _____	Denom. _____	Church _____	Denom. _____	
Spouse (if attending) _____				
I will attend:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 1.....August 4 - 9, 1974 <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 2.....August 11 - 16, 1974				
Amount enclosed _____				
To be paid later _____				

Enrollment fee is \$24.30 per person. Room and board is \$98.00. Special reduced rate for spouses is \$83.10. Children under 12 are \$63.10. There is no charge for children under 2; and child care during sessions is provided without charge.

**REGISTRATION FORM**

Fill out and mail to:

The Adult Christian Education Foundation  
 313 Price Place, Box 5305  
 Madison, Wis. 53705

PLEASE ENROLL THE FOLLOWING IN  
 A TEACHERS' WORKSHOP:

Name _____	Address _____	City _____	State _____	Zip _____
Church _____	Denom. _____	Church _____	Denom. _____	
Spouse (if attending) _____				
I will attend:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 1.....August 4 - 9, 1974 <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop 2.....August 11 - 16, 1974				
Amount enclosed _____				
To be paid later _____				

## APPENDIX V



## APPENDIX X

# **THE BETHEL SERIES**

## **NATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS**

### **January 1973**

**AGENDA**

	PAGE
I. The Structure of the Congregational Phase	2
II. Classification Data	3
III. A Procedure to Insure a Closed Enrollment	4
a) Closing Supplies Order Form	5
b) Ordering Congregational Material	15
IV. When the Congregational Program Begins	18
V. Miscellaneous Matters	19
VI. Question Period	19
VII. Step-By-Step Check List for Bethel Series Administration	20

**A. Recommends a six-semester plan.**

**B. Definition of a semester.**

**C. Content offered in each semester:**

Sem. 1 - Unit A - Studies 1 through 6 O.T.  
Sem. 2 - Unit B - Studies 7 through 13 O.T.  
Sem. 3 - Unit C - Studies 14 through 20 O.T.  
Sem. 4 - Unit D - Studies 1 through 8 N.T.  
Sem. 5 - Unit E - Studies 9 through 14 N.T.  
Sem. 6 - Unit F - Studies 15 through 20 N.T.

**D. Recommends realistic timing of semesters to prevent bogs in program.**

#### **ALTERNATIVE I**

1973 - Sem. 1 Nov. 7 through Dec. 19 . . . . . Offers Unit A  
1974 - Sem. 2 Begins 7 weeks before Ash Wed. . . . . Offers Unit B  
(Jan. 9 through Feb. 20)

Mid Week Lenten Services Same Hour

1974 - Sem. 3 Begins first Wed. evening after Easter . . . . . Offers Unit C  
(April 17 through May 29)  
1974 - Sem. 4 Nov. 6 through Dec. 18 . . . . . Offers Unit D  
1975 - Sem. 5 Begins 6 weeks before Ash Wed. . . . . Offers Unit E  
(Jan. 3 through Feb. 5)

Mid-Week Lenten Services Same Hour

1975 - Sem. 6 Begins first Wed. evening after Easter . . . . . Offers Unit F  
(April 6 through May 18)

#### **ALTERNATIVE II**

1973 - Sem. 1 Oct. 17 through Nov. 28 . . . . . Offers Unit A

Mid Week Advent Services Same Hour

1974 - Sem. 2 Begins 7 weeks before Ash Wed. . . . . Offers Unit B  
(Jan. 9 through Feb. 20)

Mid Week Lenten Services Same Hour

1974 - Sem. 3 Begins first Wed. evening after Easter . . . . . Offers Unit C  
(April 17 through May 29)  
1974 - Sem. 4 Oct. 16 through Nov. 27 . . . . . Offers Unit D

**Mid Week Advent Services Same Hour**

### **Mid Week Lenten Services Same Hour**

**1975 - Sem. 6 Begins first Wed. evening after Easter . . . . . Offers Unit F  
(April 6 through May 18)**

#### **E. THE IMPORTANT UPWARD MOVEMENT PRINCIPLE**

## **PRESUPPOSES:**

1. A controlled enrollment plan
  2. An initial enrollment quota
  3. A realistic appraisal of loss ratios: 6-3-3-2-2
  4. A structured plan for supplementing loss ratios

**RECOMMENDS:**

**Individual class size of 30 -**

1. For classes' benefit
  2. For teachers' benefit
  3. For program's benefit

**RECOMMENDS:**

1. Class Placement
  2. Class Hour
  3. Class Matching
  4. Ignoring Personal Demands



- I. Information Phase . . . . . March 4 - April 28 - Page 4**  
**II. Enrollment Phase . . . . . April 29 - June 6 - Page 13**

**Alert for Materials Needed:**

- 1. FOAMBOARD QUOTA NUMBERS AND DISCS . . . . . By Mar. 4, 1973**
  - 2. "TIME FOR DECISION" ENVELOPES . . . . . By April 22, 1973**
  - 3. BULLETIN COVERS . . . . . By April 29, 1973**
  - 4. OFFICIAL ENROLLMENT CARDS. . . . . By April 29, 1973  
(only initial supply furnished)**
  - 5. CONTACT CARDS FOR MAILING AND  
PEW RACKS . . . . . By April 22, 1973**

## **[THE PROCEDURE TO INSURE A CLOSED ENROLLMENT]**

### **I. INFORMATIONAL PHASE**

- Sunday  
March 4
- A. Display in narthex using one large painting and two textbooks.
- B. Insert in bulletin:  
\_\_\_\_ Church is one of the 240 congregations in the nation which will introduce The Bethel Series Bible Study Program on a congregational-wide level this fall. The first unit of study for the congregation at large will begin on \_\_\_\_\_ evening, November\_\_\_\_\_, and will conclude on \_\_\_\_\_evening, December \_\_\_\_\_. May we encourage you to make plans now to keep those seven evenings open so that you might participate in this exciting new Bible study venture. Additional information on the Bethel Series classes will be made available to you in the very near future.
- Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
March 4  
and  
March 10
- A. POST QUOTA NUMBER, TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY NUMBER AND TEACHERS' DISCS in the classroom. Explain disc removal plan and emphasize individual teacher effort if a closed enrollment is to be achieved.
- B. ORGANIZE A DISPLAY COMMITTEE out of teacher trainee class which will be responsible for a new display in the narthex each Sunday for the next 14 weeks. Stress the necessity for imaginative and varied display. Displays must be placed where they will be seen by most of the people attending worship services.  
**SUGGEST VARIATIONS:** Streamers, drapes, foam cuts, class photos, teachers' photos, etc.
- C. FORM AN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACT COMMITTEE which will find ways to bring news about the forthcoming congregational studies before every organization and EVERY WORKING COMMITTEE in the parish. **THESE CONTACTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY SATURDAY, APRIL 28,** as official opening enrollment date will be on Sunday, April 29. Let these contacts be made by an able teacher (preferably a man). A three- to five-minute presentation before each organization and working committee should be sufficient. The contact committee must work toward one objective, i.e., **TO STIMULATE INTEREST IN THE FALL CONGREGATIONAL STUDIES.**
- D. Form a contact committee which will find ways to bring news about the forthcoming congregational studies before every women's circle in the parish. The class may select one, two, or three of its teachers (preferably women) to make these contacts. When the contacts are made before each circle, the person making the presentation should stress:
1. That many men will be enrolled. Wives can help by informing their husbands of that fact. This is not a congregational study for women alone. **IT IS FOR MEN AND WOMEN.**

IMPO

RE

BUL



No. 641 (Sample Attached)

No. 642

No. 643

No. 644

130

Order each cover desired in multiples of 100 each.

(Minimum order 400 covers at 2¢ per cover.)

## TIME FOR DECISION ENVELOPES



Designed specifically for use in the enrollment phase of the program. Printed in two colors, red and black. Price 3¢ each.

### IF CHECK ACCOMPANIES ORDER—WE PAY POSTAGE

#### FILL IN FOR YOUR RECORD

To

**STRAUS PRINTING COMPANY**

1028 E. WASHINGTON AVENUE - P.O. BOX 2118  
MADISON, WISCONSIN 53701

BULLETIN COVER 641

BULLETIN COVER 642

BULLETIN COVER 643

BULLETIN COVER 644

TOTAL BULLETIN COVERS \$\_\_\_\_\_

Time for Decision Envelopes  
@ 3¢ each \$\_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL \$\_\_\_\_\_**

Reporting of classification size on the attached order form does not constitute an order of congregational materials. Please follow instructions on page 15 entitled "Ordering Your Congregational Materials."

CLASSIFICATION\_\_\_\_\_

5

CLASSIFICATION\_\_\_\_\_

**ENCLOSE CHECK AND SAVE POSTAGE**

Pastor\_\_\_\_\_

Church\_\_\_\_\_

Street\_\_\_\_\_

City and State\_\_\_\_\_

(To Be Reproduced Locally)

**Coupon On**

**Reverse Side**

**for Ordering**

**Closing**

**Supplies**

**Deadline – March 1**

2. A nursery will be provided to take care of small children when the classes are in session.
- E. INSTRUCT EVERY TEACHER TRAINEE TO PREPARE A CONCRETE CONTACT LIST. Example: If the teacher responsibility number per teacher is 12, then every teacher trainee should know exactly what 12 people he or she plans to contact. A written statement with the 12 names on it should be given to the pastor at the next teacher trainee meeting. At that time all lists should be gone over orally to avoid duplication of contacts. STRESS MAN AND WIFE CONTACTS. STRESS the fact that every teacher trainee contact must be completed no later than Saturday evening, April 28.
- F. Inform teacher trainees of the fact that *ENROLLMENTS ARE FOR THE PROGRAM, NOT FOR INDIVIDUAL TEACHER'S CLASSES*. When all enrollments are in classes will be subdivided and the teacher will then be assigned to a class.

Sunday  
March 11

- A. New display in narthex.  
B. Insert in bulletin:

#### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES PROGRAM**

Most of you are aware of the fact that \_\_\_\_\_ of your fellow members have been involved in a rigid teacher training program for the last \_\_\_\_\_ months to prepare themselves for the task of teaching the Bethel Series in our parish. When they complete their training in the fall of this year, they will be anxious to share with you the thrill which they have known in pursuing a systematic study of the Scriptures. The names of these teacher trainees are listed today so that those of you who are interested in enrolling in the first unit of study which begins on \_\_\_\_\_ evening, November \_\_\_\_\_, may contact them for information on enrollment procedure.

233-8082                            256-5136

Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
March 11 and  
March 17

- A. Collect contact lists from each of the teacher trainees. Go over these lists orally in class to avoid duplication of contact. *INSTRUCT TRAINEES TO BEGIN THEIR CONTACTS IMMEDIATELY* and inform of report of contacts made to be a part of each trainee meeting from now until April 28.
- B. *CLARIFY CONTACT PURPOSE WITH TEACHERS.* These first contacts are to lay the groundwork for official enrollment which opens on Sunday, April 29. The contact should be of this nature:

"May I plan on enrolling you for the program (first unit of study, Nov. \_\_\_\_\_ to Dec. \_\_\_\_\_) when enrollment officially opens April 29?"

C. Call for a report from the contact committees as to SPECIFIC PLAN which they intend to put into operation.

D. Call for a report from the display committee as to SPECIFIC PLANS which they have formulated.

*THE PASTOR MUST, DURING THE INFORMATIONAL PHASE OF THE PROGRAM, KEEP A CONSTANT CHECK ON THE COMMITTEES PLANS AND PROCEDURES SO THAT HE CAN BE ASSURED THAT THE OBJECTIVES OF THESE COMMITTEES ARE BEING CARRIED OUT.*

Sunday  
March 18

A. New display in narthex.

B. Insert in bulletin:

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

QUESTION: Is it true that no other events will be scheduled on \_\_\_\_\_ evenings at \_\_\_\_\_ once the new Bethel Bible Study Program begins on a congregational-wide level?

ANSWER: Yes. \_\_\_\_\_ night at \_\_\_\_\_ will soon become *BIBLE STUDY NIGHT* in our congregation. All organizational meetings, choir rehearsals, committee meetings, etc., will be scheduled on other nights of the week to allow everyone to take advantage of this new program.

Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
March 18 and  
March 24

A. Call for a report on first contacts made by teacher trainees. If the teacher feels certain that his or her contact will enroll when official enrollment begins, *PLACE A BANNER UPON THE TEACHER DISC FOR THAT TEACHER.* (One banner for every certainty)

B. Call for a report from the display committee.

C. Call for a report from the contact committees. *IF THERE IS ANY INDICATION OF AN UNCERTAINTY OF PROCEDURE AT THIS DATE ... Lower the boom! A comprehensive, thorough information program is imperative to a successful enrollment program.*

- Sunday            A. New display in narthex.
- March 25        B. Insert in bulletin:

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

**QUESTION:** Will the Bethel Bible study classes be conducted every \_\_\_\_\_ night of the year once this program begins in our congregation?

**ANSWER:** No. The program schedule calls for only three seven-week units a year. This means that when you pre-enroll for attendance in classes, you enroll for only one seven-week unit at a time. Here is the time schedule as it has been set up.

Unit 1	_____ nights . . . . Nov.	_____ through Dec.	_____
Unit 2	_____ nights . . . . Jan.	_____ through Mar.	_____
Unit 3	_____ nights . . . . Apr.	_____ through May	_____

- Teacher            A. Call for a report on contacts made by teacher trainees. Place progress banners on teachers' discs.
- Trainee
- Meeting
- between            B. Call for a report from the contact committees.
- March 25 and
- March 31            C. Call for a report from the display committee.

- Sunday            A. New display in narthex.
- April 1            B. Insert in bulletin:

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

**QUESTION:** If I enroll in the Bethel Series Bible study classes which begin at \_\_\_\_\_ Church on \_\_\_\_\_ evening, November \_\_\_\_\_, will I be asked questions in those classes?

**ANSWER:** No, the teachers will not quiz you on your knowledge of the Bible. Although every person enrolling in these studies will have opportunity to ask any question which he or she wishes, no teacher will ask you questions unless you indicate a desire to respond to questions raised in the class.

Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
April 1 and  
April 7

- A. Call for a report on contacts made by teacher trainees. Place progress banners on teachers' discs.
- B. Call for a progress report by the organization committees.
- C. Call for a report from the display committee.

Sunday  
April 8

- A. New display in narthex.
- B. Insert in bulletin:

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

**QUESTION: If I enroll in the Bethel Series Bible study classes, will I be required to write examinations?**

**ANSWER: No, not unless you choose to do so.**

**QUESTION: Well, how can that be? I have heard that the teacher trainees who are using this format have been required to write many examinations.**

**ANSWER: That is true! But the congregational phase of The Bethel Series is much different than the teacher trainee phase. Those people who have been in training for the last \_\_\_\_\_ months had to submit themselves to intensive study disciplines because they were and are being trained to be teachers. Their task has been to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the total content of the Scriptures. As such, the writing of exams has been helpful and useful to them in accomplishing that purpose.**

**QUESTION: How about homework and outside reading assignments? What are the requirements in those areas?**

**ANSWER: If you are to gain anything from the classes, you must do some work outside of the class sessions themselves. As such, some reading assignments will be provided for you as you progress from study to study. Though a student in grade school, high school, or college could conceivably learn something by just listening to the teacher, there is little question that he will learn immeasurably more if he does additional study outside of the classroom. The same principle applies to Bible study. Hence, reading assignments will be provided which will permit as much outside study as your time allows.**

- Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
April 8 and  
April 14**
- A. Call for a report on contacts made by the teacher trainees. Place progress banners on teachers' discs.
  - B. Call for a progress report by the organization committees.
  - C. Call for a report from the display committee.

- Sunday  
April 15**
- A. New display in narthex.
  - B. Insert in bulletin:

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

**QUESTION:** My husband is a little hesitant about enrolling in the Bethel Series studies. He wonders if there will be any other men enrolled or whether this will be primarily a woman's program?

**ANSWER:** Put your hubby at ease on that point. Unless your pastor has completely miscalculated the interest which is being expressed in these studies by both men and women, he is convinced that this is one Bible study program which will have as many men enrolled as women.

**QUESTION:** Will there be any enrollment fees for these classes?

**ANSWER:** Yes, For each seven-week unit of study there will be an enrollment fee of \$3.00 per person. When man and wife enroll together and use only one textbook, they pay a total of \$4.00 per seven-week unit. These enrollment fees help to pay for the textbook which you will receive as you pursue this study.

- Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
April 15 and  
April 21**
- A. Call for a report on contacts made by the teacher trainees. Place progress banners on teachers' discs.
  - B. Call for a progress report by the organization committees.
  - C. Call for a report from the display committee.

At this point of the informational phase of the program, if any of the teacher trainees have been negligent or careless in making week to week contacts, it may be time for some man-to-man talk with that trainee in private. Too much depends upon concerted individual teacher effort to permit laziness to interfere with the objectives. Further, if the pastor notes that a trainee has been making contacts faithfully but has had little success in getting people on his certainty list, it might be well for the pastor to suggest some names to that person for contact, who might be good prospects if a call were made upon them.

Sunday  
April 22

- A. New display in narthex.

- B. Bulletin insert:

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE STUDY PROGRAM**

**QUESTION:** When can I be officially enrolled in the forthcoming Bethel Series Bible study classes?

**ANSWER:** Official enrollment begins next Sunday, April 29. At that time the teacher trainees will be provided with the enrollment cards, and if you have contacted them about your interest in these studies, they will call on you sometime soon after April 29 and will give you the opportunity to sign an enrollment card.

Monday  
April 23

**SEND MAILER TO EVERY FAMILY UNIT IN CONGREGATION**

This Mailer:

- A. Reviews questions and answers.
- B. Lists further questions which will be pertinent to individual parish setting.
- C. Re-lists teacher trainee names and telephone numbers.
- D. Includes *CONTACT CARD* to be sent back to church office. (see sample on page 6)
- E. Announces official opening of enrollment on following Sunday.
- F. Includes a pastoral letter.
- G. "TIME FOR DECISION" ENVELOPES AVAILABLE AT COST (see page 5)

Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
April 22 and  
April 28

- A. Call for report from teacher trainees on further contacts made and place progress banners on teachers' discs.
- B. Call for final report from organizational committees.
- C. Call for report from display committee.

**AT THIS POINT THE CLASS SHOULD MAKE AN ANALYSIS OF WHERE IT STANDS IN TERMS OF ITS OBJECTIVES. Will it succeed in closing enrollment at an early date? Does it need to take further action to generate interest in the forthcoming studies?**

Sunday  
April 29

- A. New display in narthex.
- B. Use Bulletin Numbers 641, 642, 643, 644, as noted on page 5.
- C. *OPENING OF ENROLLMENT PHASE OF BETHEL SERIES PROGRAM.*
- D. Suggestion that pastor preach on theme: "The Urgent Needs for Bible Study."
- E. Print on back of bulletin:

*YOU MAY NOW OFFICIALLY ENROLL FOR THE FIRST UNIT OF STUDY IN THE BETHEL SERIES BIBLE CLASSES. If you have not already contacted one of the teachers for information on enrollment procedure, may we encourage you to do so at your earliest convenience as \_\_\_\_\_ Church will close its enrollment when \_\_\_\_\_ of its members are registered.*

## **II. ENROLLMENT PHASE . . . APRIL 29 - JUNE 6**

Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
April 29 and  
May 5

- A. Call for teachers' reports on enrollment thus far. If a teacher has enrolled his or her quota, *REMOVE THAT TEACHER'S DISC FROM DISPLAY.* STRESS: Deadline date . . . May 6, 8:00 P.M. . . for completion of reports on certainties.

Sunday  
May 6

A. New display in narthex.

B. Bulletin insert:

We are thrilled with the interest which our members are showing in the forthcoming Bethel Series Bible Study Program. All indications at this moment point to a heavy enrollment for the first unit of study which begins on November \_\_\_\_\_. If you have not already indicated your desire to enroll in one of these classes, may we encourage you to fill out one of the contact cards found in the pew racks this morning. That card will be given to one of the teachers and a call will be made upon you soon to enroll you in the fall program.

C. Place contact cards in each pew rack.

Sunday  
Evening  
May 6

When all the reports are in on teachers' enrollment efforts, you will have the information necessary to plan the next part of your enrollment procedure.

## THE ALTERNATIVES

**ALTERNATIVE 1:**

If you have reached 3/5ths of your enrollment quota by this time, print the first 1/5 of those names in next Sunday's bulletin and hold back on the remaining 2/5ths, so you can add many new names for the next three weeks.

***IMPORTANT: In that first printing of names . . . be sure to list men's names, FIRST.***

**EXAMPLE:**

We are happy to announce the names of the first \_\_\_\_\_ people who enrolled in the Bethel Series Bible Study Program, which begins in our congregation this fall:

Mr. and Mrs. John Anderson, Jack Leonsen, Robert Kildahl, Mr. and Mrs. Olaf Peterson, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Bilse, Andrew Kelisvig, Mr. and Mrs. Jules Schlachtenhaufen, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Tibbits, Mrs. Julia Olafson, Mr. and Mrs. P. J. Klippen, etc.

***NEXT WEEK WE WILL ADD TO THIS LIST THE NAMES OF \_\_\_\_\_ more people who have already enrolled. May we suggest that if you have not indicated your desire to enroll in these classes that you do so very soon. There are CONTACT CARDS in the pew racks for your convenience. REMEMBER, WE MUST CLOSE ENROLLMENT WHEN \_\_\_\_\_ of our people have registered.***

**ALTERNATIVE 2:**

If, on the evening of April 16, you do not have at least 3/5ths of your quota filled by actual enrollment cards turned in by the teachers . . . DO NOT BEGIN PRINTING NAMES IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN UNTIL the 3/5ths margin is reached, and then print only 1/5th of those names on the first succeeding Sunday morning.

**OR**

If you do have the 3/5ths margin, but most of the enrollees are women, delay printing until you can begin with a long list of men's names in the first printed list of enrollees.

# ORDERING YOUR CONGREGATIONAL MATERIALS

## WHEN TO ORDER . . .

Congregational materials should be ordered as soon as you close your enrollment. Your order will be acknowledged. If *acknowledgment* is NOT received by August 15 please let us know.

## HOW TO ORDER . . .

Congregational materials are ordered by completing the order form below. The necessary materials for your classification for the first three semesters will be shipped to you by commercial truck in time for your fall classes. \*

## WHERE TO ORDER . . .

Your first order *must* be entered through the Foundation office. Subsequent orders should be placed directly with the printer. (Order forms will be packed in the shipment in Unit A)

\*

**MATERIALS WILL BE SHIPPED BY TRUCK — FREIGHT CHARGES COLLECT**

### FILL IN FOR YOUR RECORD

Date.....

To:

**ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION**  
Box 5305  
Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Gentlemen:

We have closed our enrollment. Please send us materials for Classification .....  
(to be shipped in time for the fall semester) We anticipate starting classes on .....

PASTOR .....

CHURCH .....

STREET .....

CITY AND STATE .....

### ORDER FORM

Date.....

To:

**ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION**  
Box 5305  
Madison, Wisconsin 53705

Gentlemen:

We have closed our enrollment. Please send us materials for Classification .....  
(to be shipped in time for the fall semester) We anticipate starting classes on .....

PASTOR .....

CHURCH .....

STREET .....

CITY AND STATE .....

**IMPORTANT**

Complete

and

Mail

Coupon

on

Reverse

Side

as soon as you have

**closed your enrollment!**

Sunday  
Morning  
May 13

- A. New display in narthex for both Alternatives 1 and 2.
- B. Bulletin insert for Alternative 1: (Procedure as noted on page 14 for those who have reached the 3/5ths margin)
- C. Bulletin insert for Alternative 2:

The pastor and the teacher trainees want to convey their appreciation to the congregation this morning for the fine response which many of you have made in relationship to enrollment in the Bethel Series Bible Study Program. We congratulate you for being willing to commit yourselves to a Bible study program that is still six months away from the beginning date. In order that others in the congregation might have the opportunity to see the wide interest which this venture has incurred, we will soon begin to print the names of those of you who have enrolled.

Teacher  
Trainee  
Meeting  
between  
May 13  
and  
May 19

**FOR ALTERNATIVE 2's:** If you have not yet reached the 3/5ths mark in actual enrollment, it is suggested that the class go over the entire congregational membership list and pursue a systematic coverage (personal contacts) of the total membership.

**OR**

It is suggested that the pastor go over the congregational membership and put into the hands of the most successful teacher trainees (in the area of solicitation) those names. A concerted effort in this direction may soon produce the necessary 3/5ths margin. Once that 3/5ths margin has been reached, the Sunday by Sunday printing of the enrollees' names in the church bulletin will produce a mounting interest in the congregation which will soon result in a closed enrollment.

**IF POSSIBLE EVERY CONGREGATION SHOULD  
TRY TO CLOSE ENROLLMENT BY JUNE 6**

**QUESTIONS ON CONTROL PRINCIPLE?**

**A FINAL NOTATION**

When your quota is reached, avoid all temptations to increase the opening enrollment quota. **BUILD A BIBLE STUDY WAITING LIST** for a new Unit A to begin in January of 1974. The waiting list is an integral part of a successful upward movement in the long-term enrollments!

**WHEN ENROLLMENT IS CLOSED, SEEK OUT  
NEWSPAPER COVERAGE ...**

#### **IV. WHEN THE CONGREGATIONAL PROGRAM BEGINS**

##### **A. The Interim Period**

1. When enrollment is closed, the pastor determines the class make-up.
  - a. Age Factor
  - b. Balance Factor (men and women)
  - c. Temperament Factor
  - d. Viewpoint Factor
2. Pastor then chooses a teacher who will best suit the needs of the individual class unit.
3. Master enrollment list with names, addresses, and telephone numbers of enrollees prepared for each class and given to teacher.
4. Teachers call each enrollee by phone three weeks before program beginning date to inform students of class location, etc.

##### **B. The First Class Session**

1. Congregational meetings one hour in length.
2. On the first class night all enrollees (cong.) and teachers meet together in the sanctuary.
  - a. Pastor discusses with assembly the necessity of honoring interpretive principles if Biblical study is to bear fruit in terms of enlightenment and understanding.

*CITES:*

*HEBREW VS. GREEK COMPARISONS IN THOUGHT FORM*

*LIMITATION PRINCIPLE . . .* i.e., the Bible does not tell us everything about everything.

*HISTORICAL PRINCIPLE . . .* i.e., seeing the message in relationship to its historical context.

*LITERARY PRINCIPLE . . .* i.e., recognition of the fact that the Biblical writers use various literary forms to convey their message.

*RELIGIOUS VS. SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLE . . .* i.e., Bible's message is religious in thrust, not scientific.

- b. Pastor encourages all enrollees to bring Bibles (men and women). Suggests uniformity in choice of Bible (R.S.V.)
- c. Pastor encourages enrollees to apply themselves to study habits outside of classroom sessions.
- d. Pastor encourages enrollees to stick with the program - to be regular in attendance as each segment of study is structured and absences will soon find the enrollee unable to comprehend forthcoming studies.

- e. Pastor introduces each teacher - the enrollees of each class are taken by that teacher directly to their classrooms.
- f. Teachers take roll and record attendance on roll card.
- g. Teachers distribute book covers and frontispiece and assignment sheets for Lesson 1 to each enrollee.
- h. First class hour is dismissed.

**C. The Second and Consecutive Class Sessions**

1. Each teacher takes roll each week.
2. Teacher distributes chapter for evening and next reading assignment at end of each class session.
3. Recommended that absentees be called by phone by the teacher: "We missed you in class last night."
4. Pastor meets with teachers after class sessions to discuss questions which have been raised in classroom AND TO GIVE CONFIDENCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO TEACHERS IN THEIR NEW ROLE.
5. On fifth meeting of each class, teacher distributes a blank sheet of paper and asks those who wish to enroll in second semester to sign their names. (No enrollment fees collected for second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth semester until classes are in session)
6. On sixth meeting or seventh - all registrations for second semester must be in.
7. Loss ratios are supplemented by adding new Unit A during second semester. This new Unit A made up of people on Bible study waiting list.

**V. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

- A. Recommend graduation service for teachers
- B. Diplomas can be secured from ACEF office
- C. Pins can be secured from ACEF office
- D. Teachers' Workshops in Madison during the summer of 1973.

- I. August 5 - 10
- II. August 12 - 17

**VI. CONCLUSION PERIOD**

## STEP-BY-STEP CHECK LIST FOR BETHEL SERIES ADMINISTRATION

Follow procedures outlined for informational phase.

Reproduce **contact** cards locally. (Page 6)

Order enrollment phase materials. (Page 5)

(**Enrollment** cards provided only for initial enrollment quota.)

Encourage teachers to sign up for one of the National Teachers Workshops. (Summer 1973)

Invite new and/or other staff personnel to register for attendance at one of the summer orientation clinics. (No additional enrollment fee is required.)

Follow procedures outlined for enrollment phase.

Send order form for congregational materials as soon as enrollment is closed. (Page 15)

Check out materials when they arrive. Note that student assignment sheets are collated with each lesson. Sign receipt only after you have accounted for correct number of cartons as shown on the freight bill.

Order teachers' pins and diplomas from ACEF office.

Plan graduation service for Sunday before congregational classes begin.

Prepare lecture for opening of congregational classes.

Check inventory of supplies for Semester 2. (November 1973)

Begin a new teacher training class. (January 1974)

Check inventory of supplies for Semester 3. (February 1974)

Invite new teachers to attend regional Teachers banquet. (January 1974)

Encourage teachers who could not attend last summer to sign up for National Teachers Workshop. (Summer 1974)

Place order with Straus Printing Co. for New Testament congregational materials (2nd year = 1974-1975 = semesters 4, 5 and 6). **THIS DOES NOT COME AUTOMATICALLY.** (Place order by September 1, 1974)

Enroll for the three New Dimensions courses and attend clinic in summer of 1975.

**NEED HELP?? HAS THERE BEEN A STAFF CHANGE??**

*Don't hesitate to write or call*

**The ACEF Office or**

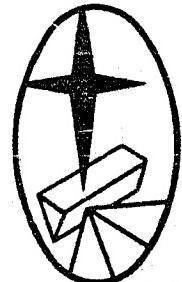
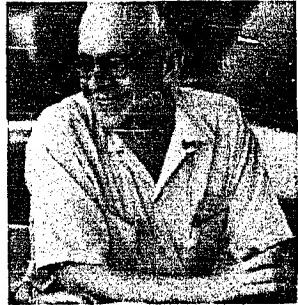
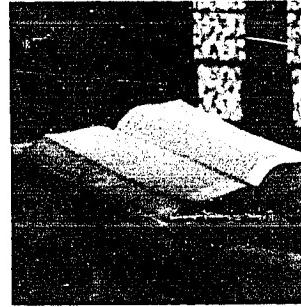
John C. Pfitzer, Director of Field Services  
Box 5305, Madison, WI 53705 — (608/238-0296)

# THE BETHEL SERIES

The adult Bible program that is a proven success

138

## APPENDIX Y



The Bethel Series has been more effective than any other program in getting adults involved in Bible study. More than 500,000 men and women have taken part in the program. Over 50,000 lay members have been trained to teach the Bible more effectively.

It is adaptable and effective in churches of all sizes, from 50 to 5,000 members.

The Bethel Series is an investment in the Christian life of your people. It requires a minimum of four years, many hours of challenging study, and it costs money. This commitment of time, work and money is one of the key factors that makes the program so successful.

The format and disciplines of the Bethel Series guarantee broad participation and involvement of your adult members. The study results in more Biblically literate church members, and better sermon communication.

The program produces teachers who are equipped to use the Scriptures—men and women qualified and willing to teach church school classes.

As a result of the Bethel Series experience, leaders develop who can organize and direct future adult study and training groups.

Bethel Series graduates are strengthened as Christians and show more concern about stewardship and evangelism.



Often as a result of the Bethel Series, churches report increased attendance, more meaningful worship and communion services, and more participation in all church activities.

The Bethel Series is interdenominational. It works successfully in churches of all denominations because the local minister directs the training of his leaders and the understanding of the Scriptures.

The program is international...active throughout the U.S., and in Canada, the Canal Zone, Mexico, the Grand Bahamas, Brazil, Japan, India, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, and Formosa.

The Bethel Series is a long-range program for involvement in Bible study by your adult members. It is designed to bring an enriching experience to the minister, the leadership elements of the church, and to the adult body of the church...not just for weeks or months, but for years to come.



*"...that God's people will be equipped to do better work for Him, building up the church, the body of Christ, to a position of strength and maturity."*

*Ephesians 4:12*

The problem of religious communication on a congregation-to-minister level is a serious one. This "Bible gap" is so wide that often people listening to a Sunday sermon don't really know what is being said.

The Bible gap exists in churches of every denomination, size and location . . . and it exists simply because most adults do not study the Bible. Usually only children receive formal Bible study; after age 13, any adult wishing to learn more about the Scriptures is too often on his own.

Typically, the Christian education committee within the church finds it hard to get adult members to attend Bible study. Then, when some measure of attendance is finally achieved, the adult members find that they don't get enough out of it.

How, then, do we accept and implement the challenge . . . "that God's people will be equipped to do better work for Him . . . "?

How can the Bible gap be narrowed? By returning to the basics. By building a Bible base of knowledge for better understanding. By having more Biblically literate church members. The church must be strengthened from within, before it can reach out to the community and the world. The Bethel Series not only can—but will—help.



Your congregation decides that "equipping the saints" is important, and enrolls in the Bethel Series. The congregation enrolls, not the staff.

Your minister or Christian education director attends a two-week orientation session in Madison, Wis. before any training begins.

When he returns, he selects a group of lay members from your church.

He works with these teacher-trainees in a series of weekly 2½-hour sessions over a period of two years before they begin any teaching.

The lay teachers then lead adult classes in weekly 1-hour meetings. The 40-lesson course consists of six 7-week sessions, spaced through a 2-year period.

This overview study meets adults where they are in their understanding, not where the church wishes they were. Students see each part of the Bible as it relates to the whole, and the entire Bible as it relates to each part. The program concentrates on concepts, rather than stories.

The Bethel Series provides administrative follow-through, including a full day's seminar prior to enrollment of the congregational classes.

You receive printed assignments, tests, teaching methods, teacher recruitment systems, and timetables. All materials have been developed, tested and proven in use by hundreds of congregations. A series of 40 large, full-color instructional posters are used to summarize specific concepts.



the Bethel Series  
is a series of six  
adult education  
films designed  
to help you  
teach your church  
members about  
the Christian life.

We will be happy to schedule a meeting at your church in order to fully explain the Bethel Series to the leaders of your congregation. Such a meeting would enable you to gather important reactions to the program. There is no cost or obligation, of course.

## **the Bethel series**

The Adult Christian Education Foundation (ACEF), a non-profit interdenominational organization, administers the Bethel Series.



Harley A. Swiggum



F. Peter Brinkman



Martin Rohlfing



El' Nathan Juedes

Chances are, you've heard of the Bethel Series before you received this brochure. Now we would like you to read what some ministers who have used the program think of it.

"We are nearing our first year, and I am convinced that it is the most exciting thing that has happened in this parish in the 12 years I have been here. Those who make up the Bethel Series group are not only equipped now with a Biblical knowledge base and an overview concept of Bible study... but they have become the leaders in this parish."

"I have been in the ministry 15 years and have never seen anything as rewarding as the Bethel Series. The 'Benefits of Bethel' are everywhere. You can see it in our Sunday school, our women's association, our board members, and our congregation at large. A spirit of fellowship has fostered which is based on Jesus Christ. People who have studied together support each other in prayer and in tangible ways, too."

"It is my regret that the Bethel Series did not appear in the earlier days of my ministry, so that I could have employed it in former years in former parishes; and I also say that should I change parishes sometime in the next ten years, I will again probably make the Bethel Series one of the demands of my accepting the call."

"After having come two years through the congregational phase of the Bethel Series, our enthusiasm for this excellent program is unbounded. It is strengthening the Biblical literacy of our people and increasing their appetite for Biblical study. It is, in our judgment, the finest program of adult Bible study available."

*Rev. Robert L. Koenig  
First United Methodist Church  
of Lansdowne, Pennsylvania*

"I heartily commend to you the Bethel Series program, based upon our own exciting experience with this Bible study material. In 1969 we launched six classes with an enrollment of 30 in each, and before the next two years had ended, we formed four additional classes, with over 225 people studying the Bible here at the church on Sunday nights."

"Last Monday night I began my fifth two-year class of teacher trainees. With our congregational phase, we have already had 260 people enrolled in some of the classes, and over 100 people have already completed two years of training."

"All of the 16 teacher-trainees who started six months ago are still with the course. This is the best evidence of interest and commitment that I can imagine. It has been a beautiful experience of education, growth and fellowship for all of us. Moreover, the enthusiasm is making its way through the congregation. Of all the yearly events in our congregation, this is the single most important course because of its long-term effect."

"Of all the Bible study programs I have seen, this is the best. It uses excellent educational methods, i.e. pictures, concept cards, text book, tests, etc. And the organizational methods used are tremendous—because they work."

"We have had over 30 percent of the adults take the Bethel Series, and our greatest and most immediate response was in the area of increased financial contributions. People got to see that they really do receive all things from God, and they are a little more willing to share them with many others because they are convinced that this is God's will and not just a pastor preaching about it."

*Rev. John Belcher  
Reformed Christian Church  
Spokane, Washington*



the bethel series

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bethel Series. Correspondence with Hal Hueschen, Director, November, 1974.

Dunham, Spurgeon M. III, United Methodist Reporter (January 1975).

"Factors That Affect Attendance in Church Schools," Reshaping Education Workshop No. 1, Tempe, Arizona, October 4, 1975.

Hartman, Warren. A Study of the Church School, cited in "Factors That Affect Attendance In Church Schools", Reshaping Education Workshop No. 1, Tempe, Arizona, October 4, 1975.

Hartman, Warren, George Koehler, and Horace Weaver. "An Evaluation of the Bethel Series", enclosure with letter from Rev. Mel C. Talbert, General Secretary Board of Discipleship, May 9, 1975.

La Habra United Methodist Church. Personal correspondence with Rev. Richard E. Northup, Minister of Education, December 9, 1975.

LaShure, Rev. Rich. "Bethel Bible Training Series Overview." June 12, 1975.

Northup, Rev. Dick. "Evaluation of The Bethel Series." January 23, 1975.

U. S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract cited in General Minutes of the United Methodist Church.